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PARABLES.

BY

F. A. KRUMMACHER, A. M.

Translated from the German,

BY

PROFESSOR J. H. AGNEW.

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PREFACE.

THE author of these Parables is sufficiently known to the public, to render even a condensed notice of him unnecessary. Those who wish to learn something of his history, will find it in the preface to his "Cornelius."

It is not too much to say of "Krummacher's Parables," that they are unusually interesting, and conceived in a spirit of deep piety. And whilst they will be found to be a rare treat for the young, they are not devoid of interest to those of maturer years. The oldest may be both entertained and profited by them. They teach us all to look through nature up to nature's God.

The child here learns to see God in every thing, whether in the beautiful flower, the verdant meadow, the blooming tree, the bubbling fountain, the meandering rivulet, the mighty river, the immense ocean, the winged insect, the carolling songster of the air, the floating clouds, the blue skies, the morning or the evening twilight, the rising or the setting sun; and

the most beautiful and truest moral lessons are impressed on its memory; whilst the parent, who takes an interest in the education of his little ones, will find the book abounding in most apt illustrations.

The translator commenced the work with a view to the entertainment and instruction of his own children, and now offers it to other parents and children, believing that it will be an acceptable offering, and that he who places a good book in the hands of the rising generation, does a good work for the world.

The original is in three distinct volumes, dedicated severally to Louisa, queen, Paulina, and Wilhelmina Louisa, princesses.

The following is the dedication to Paulina, a princess of Germany, which is beautifully poetic, and will probably please the reader.

J. H. Agnew.

"Selia, the son of pious parents, who dwelt on Mount Tabor, in the holy land, had often heard of the angels, who, sent by Jehovah, came down to earth and hovered over little children, to communicate to them joy and the tender word of instruction. And Selia thought within himself: The flowers of the field have their angel too, who tends them.

"So he often went out secretly on the mountain, to try to hear the hum of his wings, and his large blue eye then gazed on the heavens, or rested

thoughtfully on the blooming hill. But he saw not the angel of the Lord.

"He does his good deeds unseen, said the lad, and by night tends the flowers, that they may bloom by day, and sprinkles the dew over them; but as soon as the morning twilight comes he goes away. O, I would like so to thank him!

"So saying Selia went and plucked the prettiest flowers of the vale, and wove them into a crown. And when evening came, and the sun had gone down, he went and laid the flowers softly on the mount, and thought of the angel.

"After having done so, he returned home to his mother Salome, and was composed in spirit. And when he went into his bed-chamber, Salome asked: My Selia, what have you been doing? Have you been among the flowers again? The boy replied: Yes, my mother, I have sought out the most beautiful in the vale, and have woven them into a crown, that the angel of spring may to-night find them.

"His elder brother laughed, and said: You simpleton, if the angel forms the flowers, he surely has enough of them himself, and needs not yours.

"Then Selia was distressed and dejected, and looked at his mother.

"But she said: Be of good cheer, my dear Selia! the angel looks not only at the flowers, but looks also at the heart, with which you formed them into a crown, and dedicated it to him. He will gladly accept them.

"Then Selia was comforted, and fell asleep; and in a dream the angel of the flowers appeared to him with a friendly countenance.

"The next morning early, Selia went into the field, and returned home again with a joyful heart, exclaiming: See mother, he has been pleased with my gift, and not despised it. For on my crown too lay the sparkling *dew-drops*.

"The author dedicates these little sprigs of his fancy to the noble princess and tender mother of her people, whose chief concern is, how she may bring on the bud to bloom, and the blossom to fruit.

"Will not *Paulina*, the careful nurse of every thing beautiful and delicate, also receive with favour this small offering of profound respect."

KRUMMACHER'S PARABLES.

1. NATHAN.

NATHAN, a prophet and teacher of wisdom at Salem, sat among his disciples, and the words of doctrine and wisdom flowed like honey from his lips. Then said Gamaliel, one of his disciples, Master, how comes it that we so gladly receive your doctrine, and all hearken to the words of your mouth? The modest doctor smiled and said: Does not my name signify *to give?* Men truly are very ready to receive, if one only knows how to give.* How then do you give? inquired Hillel, another of those who sat at his feet. And Nathan replied: I offer to you the golden apple in a silver dish. The dish you *receive*, but the apple you *find.*

At another time Gamaliel asked the wise Nathan: Master, wherefore do you instruct us in parables? To which he replied: behold, my son, when I became a man, I had an intimation from the Lord,

* This is the signification of the word Nathan.

that I would become a teacher of the people, and bear witness to the truth; and the spirit of God came upon me. I have let my beard grow, clothed myself in a rough, hairy garment, and went out among the people, denouncing them in severe, strong language. But men fled before me, and laid not my words to heart, or else they misinterpreted and misapplied them. Then my spirit was grieved within me, and I fled away by night to Mount Hermon, and said within myself: Since they will not receive the light, they may wander in night and obscurity and be lost in the darkness! Thus I cried out, wandering on in the dark night with a spirit ruffled.

But lo! the twilight came, and Aurora blushed in the morning sky, and the early dew fell down upon Mount Hermon. Night withdrew, and Hermon exhaled delightful odours. The glance of Aurora was soft and lovely, and the fog floated over the top of the mountain and moistened the earth. Man walked abroad joyfully, and gazed upon the blushing Aurora. Then day came down from the heavens, and the sun went forth from the arms of Aurora, and threw his beams upon the bedewed plants.

I stood gazing and had peculiar feelings. Then the morning breeze sprang up with a rustling noise, and in the rustling I heard the voice of the Lord, speaking to me and saying: see, Nathan, thus does heaven send to mortals its most precious and gentlest gift, the sweet light of day!

As I now came down from the mountain, proceeded the prophet, the spirit of the Lord conveyed me under a pomegranate-tree. It was beautiful and shady, and bore at the same time both blossoms and fruit. I stood under its shade, looked upon its blossoms, and said: O! how lovely and rubicund it is, like the soft breath of innocence on the blooming cheeks of the daughter of Israel! When I approached nearer, I found too the brilliant fruit, concealed away under the shade of the leaves.

Then spake the word of the Lord to me out of the pomegranate, saying: Lo! Nathan, how Nature in the simple blossom promises the precious fruit and puts it forth, concealing her hand under the shadow of the leaf!

And now, continued the wise Nathan, I returned with joyful spirit to Salem. I put off my rough garb, anointed my head, and taught truth in a pleasing manner and in parables. For truth is serious and has few friends. It therefore loves a simple and gladsome dress, that it may win friends and disciples.

2. SOCRATES AND CRITIAS.

Socrates, the wise son of Sophroniscus, was one day discoursing, in a circle of his disciples, on the all-governing providence of the Deity, how he sees and hears all things, and is every where present, and

cares for all, and how he is the better apprehended and acknowledged the more he is honoured."*

In the emotion of his soul he made use of a comparison derived from the poems of the incomparable Homer, and represented the divine providence as a mother, who, softly and unseen, brushes away the flies from her little babe, sweetly slumbering.

Among his scholars was Critias, the traitor, who condemned him to death. He, thinking the comparison ignoble and common, laughed at it and felt contemptuously. Socrates, however, observed it, and saw through him. He therefore approached him and remarked: Has it not struck thee then, my dear Critias, how nearly related is the human, in its state of simplicity, to the divine? This so offended Critias that he went off in anger, while Socrates proceeded in his instruction of the rest.

When Socrates afterwards had been condemned to death, through the baseness of Critias, and was obliged to drink the poison; the tyrant remembered the words and the comparison of the wise man, and going to him said, sneeringly: Will the gods now too drive off the flies? Socrates, however, smilingly replied: The Deity, Critias, now composes me, after the fulfilled labours of the day, to a sweet slumber. Why should I then fear the flies?

* The words of Socrates taken from Xenophon.—*Memor.* 1, 4, 18.

3. THE MAN OF CARMEL.

In a small village on Mount Carmel lived a wise man, on whom the spirit of the Lord had conferred the gift of consolation and of healing. He entered every habitation where there was any one sick, and cured him of his malady; or he consoled and encouraged the dying with tender words, and moderated the lamentations of the weeping mourners. For he was acquainted with the secret powers of medicinal herbs, and had much knowledge of the hearts of men, although but young. All, consequently, loved him, and entreated him to turn into their dwellings, and his fame was sounded far and wide.

But behold! there came from the land of Egypt into the village on Carmel, and into the surrounding country, a contagious disease, with which the people sickened, and many died; for the disease was dreadful. Whenever there was one sick with it, he was sent for to heal and to comfort, by day and night. At length his body became weary, and his soul was troubled that the power of the plague was often stronger than the power of the medicinal herbs, and he began to fear for his own blooming life. For the recurrence of failures naturally begat despondency in the heart of the man struggling to keep up.

His spirit then led him out upon Mount Carmel,

where he hesitated whether to make that his abode, and not to return to the dwellings of men, or to collect medicinal herbs and plants for the comfort and cure of the sick. So he went forth and said within himself: Nature has been my teacher from my youth; she shall now also instruct me. He stood before a flower, more beautiful in its bloom than Solomon in all his glory, and said: It blooms in its beauty and its youthful vigour only *for itself*, and opens its cup to the beams of the sun, and to the soft breeze which in the evening comes up hither from the sea. What better can a man do than, unconcerned about others, to attend to *himself*, and find his enjoyment there? I shall abide on Carmel and bloom among the flowers, until at last, imperceptibly and gently, like the flowers, I fade away.

Just then a butterfly flitted about the flower. It attracted his notice, and he exclaimed: No! thou teachest a different lesson. I shall return to the abodes of men, to the splendid cities, and shall hasten to the palaces, there to reap the sweet fruit of pleasure and joy from my wisdom! As the butterfly spreads itself over the brilliant calix, so shall my life be spent in the skilful exercise of my profession!

He thus spake and looked into the calix of the flower, where, lo! there lay a dead bee at the bottom of the cup. Too heavily laden with the delicate dust of the blossom, it had expired in its efforts. He looked upon it and silently contemplated the

lifeless shell of the little creature, while the purple blush of shame was diffused over his cheeks. Holy Spirit of Nature, he exclaimed, pardon my dejection and my folly! From this time forth I follow thy beck, and return, a faithful disciple to thee and to my calling!

Thereupon he collected the choicest plants of the mountain, and with a serene countenance, revisited the village and entered the huts of the suffering.

4. THE LAMBKINS.

It was a still, serene summer's eve. The mother sat in the nursery by the cradle of her pretty babe and sang it to sleep. Her little Adelaide, with beaming eyes, came running out of the garden into the chamber, and exclaimed: O, dear mother, come out and see how beautiful! But what is it? inquired the mother. O! something very pretty, replied the little one, but you must come and see. I would very cheerfully, answered the mother very kindly, but see, little brother must sleep. Entreatingly the little girl replied: Dear mother, take little brother out with you; then he will see it too, and be glad with us. Then thought the mother within herself: how peculiar it is to the simple mind of childhood, to share every joy with others, and thus to augment and heighten it! verily, simplicity understands the art of enjoying itself better than self-seeking, philosophising wisdom. How can I longer refuse?

The mother rose up and looked into the cradle. The infant was in a deep and sweet slumber. She then took the hand of the skipping girl and said: I wonder what beautiful thing you have? When they were now out in the yard, the little innocent raised her tiny hands to heaven and exclaimed: Look, dear mother, see the little lambs up in the sky! A whole flock! How beautiful, how sweet! They were, however, the delicate fleeces of white clouds that had assumed the shape of lambs, as they sport in the meadows, all white and curly, and they now reflected the beams of the lovely full moon.

The child's mother lifted up her eyes and contemplated the clouds with a mournful pleasure; for she thought of another feature of childish simplicity which lowers down the glorious radiance of the heavenly nature to its little orbit, and clothes it with earthly beauty and grace. So the little Adelaide saw in the clouds of heaven, the lambkins of earth. Oh! blessings be upon thee, thou tender innocence of childhood; said the mother, and pressed the dear little maid to her bosom.

5. THE BLOOMING VINE.

Samuel, judge and ruler in Israel, one day visited the school of the prophets at Giboa, which he himself had founded, and was delighted with the improvement in various knowledge, and in the arts of vocal and instrumental music.

Among the pupils was a youth of the name of Adonijah, the son of Milcah, with whom Samuel was much pleased. He was brunette and beautiful to look upon, and besides had a powerful and melodious voice. But his heart was full of pride and of vain conceits, because of his superiority over the other students in wisdom and the power of reflection. Moreover he deemed himself wiser than the seven wise men, and carried himself insolently towards his teachers, and his lips were full of high sounding words and fancies.

The judge in Israel was grieved about the boy Adonijah, for he loved him above the rest, because he was full of soul and of a fine form. Therefore said Samuel: "The Spirit of God has designed the lad for a prophet in Israel: but he himself is frustrating it." He then took the youth out to a mountain, and into a vineyard upon it, which lies towards Ramah, just at the season when the vine is in bloom. Then Samuel lifted up his voice and said: What seest thou, Adonijah? I see a vineyard, replied Adonijah, and the breezes about me are all loaded with a delightful odour from the blossoms of the vine, which is diffused all abroad!

Come here then, said Samuel, and behold the blossom of the vine. The young man stepped up, looked upon it, and said: It is a delicate little blossom, unseemly in hue and modest in form. Then answered Samuel and said: Yet it brings forth a fruit of God, to make glad the heart of man, and

to cause his face to shine with renewed beauty. Adonijah, such is the noblest plant of the vine at the time of its bloom, before it produces its precious fruit! Meditate thou on the vine in thy blooming youth!

And Adonijah, the son of Milcah, took all these words of Samuel to heart, and from this time forth walked in a quiet and gentle spirit. Then men loved Adonijah and said: "The spirit of God has come upon the lad." Adonijah grew in wisdom and grace, and became a man like the herdsman of Lekoah, and like unto Isaiah, the son of Amoz, and his name was praised in all Israel.

6. THE MOSS-ROSE.

The angel that nurses the flowers and sprinkles the dew upon them in the stilly night, was slumbering one spring day in the shadow of a rose-bush. When he awoke, with smiling countenance, he said: Loveliest of my children, I thank thee for thy reviving odour, and thy cooling shade. Couldst thou yet pray for any thing more, how cheerfully would I grant it to thee! Adorn me then with some new grace, at once entreated the spirit of the rose-bush; and the angel of the flowers adorned the most beautiful of flowers with the simple moss.

Then stood it forth in modest grace, *the moss-rose*, the choicest of its kind.

Beautiful Lina, let alone the spangled attire and

precious stones, and follow the beck of maternal nature.

7. THE BROOK.

A countryman was sitting one day on the bank of a brook, which flowed by his meadow, and looking upon his heifers and calves as they fed on the pasture. But he contemplated them with no degree of pleasure, for he saw the grass to be scarce, and insufficient to support his cattle half the summer.

His neighbour approaching, noticed his sad countenance, and inquired the cause of his secret grief. He then adverted to his anxieties, and spoke of the small product of his meadow. His neighbour replied: Do as I have done with mine. It lies on the same stream, and was formerly barren, thin and unproductive. I let the brook in upon it, and the grass grew rank and tall, even to the bellies of the cattle. The husbandman was rejoiced at the good advice, went out to work at once with a company of men, who soon opened a channel for the brook. But lo! the brook so overwhelmed the meadow, that it looked like a sea, and covered it with sand and gravel. The unhappy man tore his hair, run to his neighbour, and in a great passion complained bitterly of his counsel. But said the neighbour: my dear sir, why are you angry with me because of the advice which I gave you out of a benevolent heart? Quarrel rather with yourself and your own impatient

spirit. Had you let in the enriching brook upon your meadows through small rills, they would not then have been overflown by the force of the stream; but it would have borne along with it the rich soil of the meadow underneath, and its own fatness, leaving behind its sand and gravel.

Thus is it also in the kingdom of truth.

8. SALOME.

Salome, mother of the gentle John, stood one evening on the sea of Gennesareth, in silent contemplation. The sun had sunk beneath the horizon, and the purple of the evening sky was blushing on the western heavens, and a blue mist rested on the mountains. But Salome looked down upon the surface of the sea. Then went out Zibdai, the father, and saw Salome, his wife, and said: Why standest thou thus alone in silent meditation, Salome, and the tears filling thine eyes? Then answered Salome: I am looking upon the reflection of the evening sky in the quiet surface of the lake! But why dost thou not rather look up to the sky itself? asked Zibdai. Thereupon Salome replied and said: I have before contemplated the glorious light of the heavens; but it now seems to me more beautiful in the still water of the clear sea. Behold, how quietly it flows along, and knows not that the brightness and glory of the heavens are beautifully mirrored on its surface.

And this led me to think of our beloved John with motherly feelings.

O, there is nothing more beautiful than when the brightness of heaven illumes pure simplicity and innocence, while it wends its way along in tranquil humility.

9. THE CORNFIELD.

The summer months had matured the crops of the field. The full ears rustled in the wind, and the farmer had already gone out to see whether he should send forth the reaper to reap. He thought on the extent of his barns, and calculated the profit he would derive from the fertility of his fields. For he was rich, but his heart was unsatisfied and covetous, and full of earthly cares.

Then drew near to him the wise minister of the church and said: The earth this year brings forth bread abundantly. The ears are heavy, and soon will the reaper bind the rich sheaves! Very true! replied the farmer, a more plentiful season could scarcely be expected. The land will give back the seed sown in manifold measure. Then answered the noble preacher and said: Would that the rational owner of the soil might imitate the senseless furrows which he ploughs. It receives only a little seed, and returns it multiplied. Man receives so much, yet often brings forth so little.

This remark touched the heart of the covetous farmer, and filled him with a feeling of shame. For he was avaricious and concerned about the morrow, thinking only of how he could accumulate wealth.

He, however, concealed his shame, and said to the minister: Yes, every one should be busy, and manage well his estate, that he may make others happy. Therefore man must labour in the sweat of his brow, that he may abundantly produce that which is useful, as the well cultivated fields yield back the seed so much increased. Therefore nature accumulates ear upon ear in the fields, and the whole grain-field looks like a single stalk.

The parson replied to that: The aspect of the grain-field is truly simple, and ear is joined to ear, so that many become supplied. But the seed-time is brief, and the grain grows of itself without human aid, and produces the stalk and the ear; and the harvest too is but short. So let the man at ease look upon his field, and consider the great blue-bottle, and the red popjay, and the corn-rose which bloom among the stalks, and listen to the larks which soar up from out the furrows to the very skies. For those bloom not, nor do these soar up between and above the uniform stalks of the grain, to no purpose. They would remind the owner of the field that it yields something more than the dust of the furrow, and the grain which springs up from it, in order that he, in his eager pursuit after the useful, may think also of the beautiful and the good,

and not disgracefully sink down that which is lofty to the very ground.

Thus spake the noble minister: but the remarks offended the covetous farmer, who received them with a frowning brow and went his way: for the good instruction of the wise man seems to the base heart a contemptible thing, and is to it a bitter root.

10. THE CROCODILE.

In the dim days of primitive time, a number of persons emigrated from their homes and went down into the land watered by the Nile. They were delighted with the majestic river and its sweet water, and built themselves houses on its banks. But soon there came forth from its stream, the mighty monster called the crocodile, which ground to death both man and beast with its frightful jaws. Then the men cried with loud voice upon their god Osiris, and begged him to deliver them from the monster. But Osiris answered them by the mouth of the wise priest: Is it not enough that the Deity has given you strength and intellect? He who calls for aid, when he can help himself, implores in vain!

Now they took their swords and staves, and stormed the monster in his reedy dwelling. They erected defences and dams, and in a few days

completed works, which before, they had never dreamed of possessing ability to do. And thus they became conscious of that internal latent power, which in later times founded the mighty pyramids and obelisks, and discovered many arts and implements which hitherto they had not known. For conflict with the mighty, rouses and improves the slumbering powers of man.

Yet the inhabitants on the Nile wanted weapons completely to destroy the harnessed monster in his watery dwelling. They were able only to restrain him for a short time, and with that they were content. But by degrees they lost the spirit of resistance. The monster grew larger and multiplied, and his fury was dreadful. Then the foolish and lazy people concluded to worship the crocodile as a god. They freely brought to him rich offerings, and the beast became mightier than ever, but the people sank into inactivity and stupidity. For superstitious worship and a slavish mind beget shame and cowardice.

At last the overstrained bow breaks, and vengeance falls upon the tyrant. Osiris took up the cause of those who remained, and summoned them, through the priest, to a new contest. The conflict began, and the river was red with the blood of the slain; but they were soon weary of the war, and both the priest and the oppressed people implored Osiris for help, and the god heard their prayers.

A little animal called *tezerdah*, (*ichneumon*)

stood on the bank of the Nile: See, said the priest, here is the aid Osiris sends you. How! you mock us! exclaimed the multitude of the people.

Then answered the priest and said: Await the issue, and confide in mighty power. In its hand the smallest instrument can put an end to the greatest evil.

The number of the frightful monsters soon manifestly diminished: and the people looked with astonishment on the little creature. In quiet activity it hunted the eggs and the brood of the crocodile. Thus, in an instant, it destroyed the embryo of a hundred frightful tyrants of the Nile, and freed the country of its plague, which so many heads and hands had not been able to do.

Behold then, said the wise priest, would you annihilate an evil, attack it in the bud and at the root. Then will small means easily effect what, afterwards, a host cannot accomplish.

11. THE FIRST AND LAST SMILE.

Eve, mother of all the living, brought forth her second son with anguish. The new-born infant lay upon her bosom like the dumb beasts of the field, without any indications of humanity, and the voice of its crying, and its sucking lips, were the only evidences of its feeble life.

Alas! said the mother, sighing, to the father of the child; I must not only bear my children with

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pain, but with pain also must I nurse and educate them. To me, there is no beam of joy amid the dark nights through which I watch over him! Cain's countenance is sullen and lowering, and he stalks before us like the spectre of the sins we have committed. And from this one comes only the voice of wailing, or he reposes on my bosom totally unlike a human being, and his spirit resembles an undeveloped leaf, that withers in the bud. How much more happy than man are the animals of the field and the birds of the air! Skips not the lamb about its mother, and do not the little chickens shelter themselves under the wings of the parent hen? Ah! the animals around us remind us of our sins, when we look upon them!

Thus she spake, and called the boy Abel, which signifies *the mourning one*, and wept over him for a whole month. But Adam said: Weep not, mother, the Lord will cause it to be well with us and will have compassion on us! Then Jehovah took compassion on the mourning mother, and the angel of Paradise drew near unseen, and touched the lips of the child as he lay on the bosom of the weeping mother, when lo! the little one opened its delicate lips; there was a dimple on its cheek, the radiance of the first smile played upon its countenance, and its eyes looked up sweetly upon the mother.

Then she arose with tears of joy, called the father of the boy and reached to him the child

and it smiled on the father too, the second time. The father lifted up his voice and said: The Lord be praised! He hath turned our mourning into joy! He has exalted our child above the beasts of the field, which bow down their heads towards the earth, and whose countenance is without character and expression! But the countenance of the child has become like the glance of the messenger of the Lord, and like the countenance of Eve, when her heart is full of joy and thanksgiving. Blessed are we, for our eyes have seen the sign of the Lord. Jehovah's breath is in Abel. Does it not hover about the face of the child, as when in Spring his breath renews the face of the earth. Holy be to us the day on which the Lord has revealed it to us, and his name be praised forever! So spake Adam, and pressed the babe to his heart.

Eve tended the little one and said: I have seen the *sign of the Lord* upon him, therefore will I foster him with carefulness!

And the child grew in wisdom and grace, and Adam gave him a flock to feed and watch, and the flock was beautiful and large, and the lambs loved the boy, for Abel was tender-hearted and kind. But Cain burned with anger in his heart, and envy and malice arose within him, because the Lord was with Abel: for Cain's heart was wicked from his childhood up, and the Lord was not with him.

On his birth-day, Abel brought an offering to the Lord, devoted to him from the firstlings of his

flock, and his heart was full of joy and thanksgiving. But Cain became greatly enraged against his brother, and his countenance fell, and he smote his brother Abel that he fell to the ground. And Cain laughed in mockery over his fallen victim, and left him in his blood.

Then came the father and the mother of the youth, and found him smitten down, and Eve bowed herself upon him and wept bitterly. But Abel raised his bloody head, and rolled up his eyes upon his weeping parents, and a blissful smile played about his lips and upon his face. Then his head fell again to the earth and he gave up the ghost, and the aspect of the dead was kindly.

Then answered Eve, and said: Oh! the appearance of his countenance was as when that first time his heart unfolded itself on my bosom! Is this death; Adam? Oh, then is the death of the innocent but the second unfolding for a more beautiful blooming of a new life!

Thus spake the mother of all the living, and both mourned bitterly, and laid Abel's corpse in the bosom of the earth, and the lambs lamented over their shepherd. The flowers of the field too blossomed on his grave.

12. THE CAT.

Two men, who had devoted their lives to the study of Natural History, and daily investigated the

different classes of creatures so as to be able to converse intelligently about them, were sitting together one day talking of quadrupeds, reptiles, fish and birds, and of all manner of vegetables, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop which grows out of the wall. And they were both of one mind, and esteemed each other highly. At length they came to speak of the nature and habits of the cat, and there they differed and quarrelled.

For the one said it was the most noxious and nasty of beasts, sneaking and malicious: in disposition a tiger, and also in its form, although not in size and strength, and for that heaven could not be sufficiently thanked.

But the other said it was like the lion in magnanimity and nobleness of spirit, as well as in form; cleanly and fond, and just on that account an enemy of the smutty and fawning dog, and the most beneficial domestic animal, for which men could not sufficiently thank heaven.

The former became much enraged at this, for he admired the dog, and referred to the little dog of Tobias and of Ulysses, and of the great king.

But the other opposed to him the cat of the philosopher,* who brought optimism to the light, and excelled others in wisdom.

So they separated, without agreeing, and with inimical feelings; the one to his live birds, of some of which the cat had robbed him; the other to his

* Leibnitz, who was very fond of the cat.

stuffed ones, which, to his great vexation, the mice had gnawed.

Such are the judgments of passion and self interest.

13. THE DEFENCE.

When Nature, by her almighty creative breath, had formed the loveliest of flowers, the rose, the spirit of the rose-bush said to the angel of the flowers: Wilt thou not grant also to the noble bush a defence which shall secure it from harm and evil? Nature has given to the thorn-bush large and sharp prickles!

The thorn-bush, replied the angel of the flowers, belongs not to the noble, but to the servants in the kingdom of creation. Its design is to protect the tender plants against irrational animals, and on that account nature gave to it the thorns. Yet thy wish shall be fulfilled! Thus he spake, and covered the rose-bush with delicate prickles. Then said the spirit of the rose: To what purpose are these slender thorns? they will not defend the splendid flower. The angel of flowers replied: They are intended only to restrain the hand of the thoughtless child! Resistance would only more powerfully allure to mischief. The holy and the beautiful has its defence in itself: therefore nature gave to it the most delicate defence, which only admonishes, but does not

wound; for with the beautiful must only the delicate be associated.

So has she given to innocence bashfulness and blushing.

14. THE ELDER-STICK.

A huntsman went out a hunting with his son, and they became separated by a deep stream. At length the boy wished to cross over to his father, but was not able; for the stream was wide. He immediately cut a stick out of the bushes, set one end in the brook, supported himself fearlessly and nimbly upon it, and gave himself a powerful swing. But lo! the stick was of an elder-bush, and while the boy hung over the stream, the pole broke in two, the boy fell deep into the water, and the waves rushed in and overwhelmed him. A shepherd saw it at a distance, ran thither, and raised a tremendous shriek. But the boy, breathing heavily, parted the water from him, and swam laughing to the shore.

Then said the shepherd to the hunter: You seem to have taught your son many things well, but one thing you have forgotten. Why have you not also habituated him to examine well what is within, before he opens his heart to confidence? Had he proved the tender pith within, he would not have trusted to the deceptive bark!

Friend, replied the hunter, I have sharpened his eye and exercised his strength; and I can now leave

him to experience. Time will teach him distrust. But in the experiment he will also maintain his rectitude, for his eye is clear and his powers disciplined.

15. THE BITTER FLOWERET.

One spring day a mother went out to the hills with her little daughter. And when there, the little maid was delighted with the many flowers and plants which grew and bloomed along the way. She was pleased, however, more than all, with a delicate little flower, of a reddish hue, and beautiful. Mina, for that was the little girl's name, broke off the little flower, surveyed it with joy, kissed it and smelled it, and could not cease from her praises.

But she soon was fully satisfied with all that, and weary of it; but wishing still greater pleasure from the flower, she put it into her mouth and went to eating it.

But what followed then? Why Mina came running with all her might to her mother, crying and exclaiming: O, dear mother, the flower was so pretty in form and colour, that I eat it, but now it is so bitter that it draws up my mouth and tastes so badly. Fie! the dirty, hateful flower! So said the little girl; but her mother answered: My dear child, why do you blame the little flowers? they are still as beautiful as before in form and colour, and emit a

delightful fragrance: is not that enough? Besides, flowers were not intended to be eaten.

16. SAMUEL AND ELI, OR THE FIRST BLUSH.

The lad Samuel served the Lord at Shiloh before Eli the priest, and was acceptable with God and men: for he served the Lord with a pure heart, and was obedient and wise.

But the sons of Eli, Hophni and Phineas were wicked boys: they sought not the Lord, and their sins were very great. They stood one day before the house of their father Eli under a tree, and the lad Samuel with them, clad with a linen coat.

Hophni and Phineas were holding shameful discourse in the presence of the lad; so that Samuel blushed, and his face glowed like the red blush of evening, when the sun has set. It was his first blush of shame; for he had never before heard a naughty word out of the mouth of man from his childhood up.

But the wicked fellows laughed at the boy, and ridiculed him for blushing at their discourse. And Samuel's countenance changed, and he wept. Then came Eli, who had witnessed it all, to the boy, and said: My son, why dost thou weep? And Samuel answered: Thy sons, Hophni and Phineas, talked wickedly before me, and then my heart beat, and a fiery glow, I know not how, came into my face. And they mocked me.

Then Eli embraced the boy Samuel, and pressed him to his heart, and lifted up his voice and said: Oh, my son! weep not, and never mind their ridicule. Thou art the chosen of the Lord: but whilst I rejoice in thee, my soul is full of grief over my own children. For they have so corrupted themselves in their bloom, how can they ever bring forth good fruit!

And Eli wept over his sons, until his eyes became dim, and they only augmented his heart's sorrow. But Samuel rejoiced the heart of Eli the priest, and walked uprightly before the Lord.

17. THE BLIND MAN.

A blind man stood reaching his head up in the beams of the mild sun of spring. Its warmth streamed through his members, and its splendour penetrated the dried up sources of vision, whilst he stood fixedly presenting his face before it.

O, thou incomprehensible sea of light! he exclaimed, thou wonder of the almighty hand which fashioned thee, and leads thee on in thy glorious path! Out of thee stream forth everlasting fulness, life and heat, and thine influence is never exhausted! How great must He be who made thee!

Thus spake the blind man. One standing by heard, and was astonished at his words. He therefore inquired: How canst thou thus admire the face of day, and see it not? For that very reason, my

friend, replied the blind man. Ever since the light became darkness to my eyes, and the splendour of the sun has been excluded from me, I received it into my soul! Every sensation of its nearness causes it to arise in me, and its brightness illuminates my inner nature. You, however, only look upon it, and upon every thing else you daily see, with the bodily eye!

18. THE ROSE.

What a pity, said a child to its father, that the rose, after blooming, does not produce a beautiful fruit, and so return a thank-offering to nature in the summer, for the lovely season of its bloom in the spring. You call it the flower of innocence and joy. Then it would also be the image of gratitude. The father replied: Does it not then offer its entire form for the embellishment of spring, the favourite child of nature? And for the dew and the light, which fall upon it from above, it returns to the air its delicate fragrance; and, created for the spring, it expires with it. Dear child, delicate, unseen gratitude is the most beautiful; and how can innocence be unthankful?

19. FRIENDSHIP.

Two youths, friends, such as Damon and Pythias were, walked arm in arm, one spring day, in a grove.

Let us here, said one to the other, seek out a symbol of our friendship! Man is ever so prone to find his inward life in some emblem of nature!

Look then, said Damon, at the ivy, which twines itself around the young oak! The tree rose on high in its glory and its youthful vigour, like a column of a temple, wreathed around by boys and girls with the earliest foliage of spring. The delicate ivy embraced it, as if it strove to become one with it. Without the oak it would creep in the dust! The youths looked upon it, and said: Lovely is the image, and beautifully does the fresh verdure of the ivy adorn the venerable trunk of the oak. So the strong, ennobling itself by love, bears and supports the tender and the weak. Thus the noble Hercules, on his nervous arm, bore the childlike Innocence. Beautiful, kindly bond! but it is not the emblem of friendship.

See there, on the hill, the vine-dresser is binding the vines about the elm tree! A judicious union! The firm supports the flexible and useful, in order to supply man with the most generous of fruits. But is it not a bond established by the hand of man? said the youths. Its end is gain. Besides, cannot the vine, loaded with clusters, easily tear away the branches of the supporting tree? and its broad leaves smother the foliage of the elm?

Beautiful is the symbol: it is the symbol of the union of human powers in a civil community, for

mutual advantage. But the symbol of friendship, is it not?

The union of soul in friendship has nothing in heaven or on earth like unto it! exclaimed the youths. They stood in the united shade of two young oaks. They gazed at the tall and mighty trees. What a glorious growth! said they. Their roots are enfolded and wrapped up fast together, their heads extend up equally towards heaven! And thus they together resist the storm: and should it conquer them, they can only fall together. Is here the symbol of our friendship? asked the youth. They gazed on each other, their eyes glistened, and they warmly embraced each other in the shade of the manly oaks.

20. DEATH AND SLEEP.

Linked together like brothers the angel of sleep and the angel of death walked through the earth. It was evening. They laid themselves down upon a hill not far from the abodes of men. A melancholy stillness reigned all around, and the evening bell in the distant hamlet had ceased to toll.

In quietness and silence, as their manner is, the two beneficent genii of mankind sat in confiding embrace, and night was already drawing near.

Then the angel of sleep arose from his mossy couch, and with gentle hand scattered the imperceptible seeds of slumber. The evening wind bore

them away to the habitation of the weary peasant. And now sweet sleep came over the occupants of the rural cottages, from the grey head, who goes on his staff, down to the infant in the cradle. Sickness forgot its pains, mourning its grief, penury its cares. The eyes of all were closed.

After finishing his labour, the benevolent angel of sleep lay down again beside his brother. When the morning blushes in the east, he exclaimed with gladsome innocence, men praise me as their friend and benefactor! O, what joy, to do good unseen and in secret! How happy are we, the invisible ministers of the good spirit! How delightful our peaceful, quiet office! Thus spake the friendly angel of sleep.—The angel of death looked upon him in silent sorrowfulness, and a tear, such as immortals weep, stood in his large dark eye. Alas! said he, that I cannot, like you, congratulate myself on the joyful gratitude of men. The whole earth calls me its enemy, and the spoiler of its joys!

O, my brother, replied the angel of sleep, will not the good, in the resurrection, also recognise in thee a friend and benefactor, and gratefully bless thee? Are we not brethren, and ministers of one father?

Thus he spake, while the eye of the angel of death brightened up, and the fraternal genii embraced each other still more tenderly.

21. THE ROSE-BUD.

A child stood near a rose-bush full of buds and blooming roses. With busy delight he surveyed now this, now that, then a blown leaf, then a bud. The father was watching him at a distance. He stood under the shady foliage, and, with inward affection and peculiar feelings, his eyes were fixed on the darling of his heart. Is it not to me, said he to himself, as if a divine voice of prophecy spoke to me out of the rose-bush, which in its buds and flowers exhibits to me an emblem of future paternal joy? Or what makes the child so wonderfully beautiful and dear at the rose-bush? So spake the father.

The child was not yet weary of gazing and admiring. The admiration of the beautiful awakens the wish for the true. He wished to find out how the bud developed itself into a rose. He crossed his little arms, and looked with fixed gaze upon the bud. The father smiled.—So may higher natures smile, when they see a philosopher of earth directing his telescopic eye to a star, and his microscopic to the structure of a glow-worm.

The boy soon found all his straining of vision to be vain. He now plucked off a bud, broke it up, and examined the internal arrangement with closer scrutiny. The father then approached him, and inquired: On what are you so intently thinking, my

child? O my father, I want to know very much how this bud becomes a rose, and for that reason I have plucked it and opened it out. But I see only insignificant little leaves full of folds and wrinkles; I wish I had only not injured it! You need not be sorry about that, my child, replied the father; nature has made superabundant provision. She considered not only our necessities, but also our enjoyment and superfluous desires. You have at least learned that it is not so easy to dive into her mysteries. But, said the child, I have become nothing the wiser by it. Even if not, answered the father, you have at least the ingenuous purpose to inform yourself—a good resolution is already itself some good. The result depends not always on the man. And even if the result be favourable, yet the good purpose remains still the best thing.

After a pause, said the child with a modest, yet strong desire: Tell me then, dear father, how the bud enfolds itself into a rose? The father replied: My child, I can tell you in three words what takes place: the bud grows in size, beauty, and gracefulness to its completion. Of the rest I know as little as you.

Nature gives us the beautiful in perfection; but she conceals the hand with which she brings it forth and proffers it.

The child then took up again the broken bud, and said to the father: If the bud has power to form itself so beautifully, more so than all that men make,

why can it not then defend itself against the slender finger of a child? How has it at the same time so much and yet so little power?

Could it then have possibly formed itself, Wilhelm? asked the father, looking on the child with kindly earnestness.

O, true, he replied; the flowers have, perhaps, like me, a mother and a father, who nurse, tend, and educate them! One father with us! answered the father, deeply affected, but we see him not; we only feel his power and love within and around us!

He thus spake, and the boy felt strangely; for the father had deposited a jewel in his heart. And from this time he contemplated the rose-bush and the flowers of the field as silent fraternal beings, and grew in age, wisdom and grace. But the father pondered the child's words in his heart, and related them to the tender mother of the lad.

How near, said the mother, does the sublimest of truths lie to innocent simplicity!

22. THE STORK'S NEST.

A philosopher noticed a stork's nest on the roof of a countryman's house, and stepping up to him, said: How can you bear to have these creatures living over your heads? Who, answered the countryman, would drive away the innocent guests; and besides, do you not know that they bring a blessing upon the house? Away with your superstition,

replied the philosopher, and laughed. Now, said the other, it may be superstition, but yet therein lies a blessing, if man learns to exercise hospitality, even though it be only towards a confiding animal.

Then said the philosopher: The stork, the swallow, and the blind-worm,* are at liberty to turn in with you: why then do you persecute the viper, the hen-harrier, and the martin? How! replied the countryman, should we then honour the malicious, and expect a blessing from care of the mischievous?

The philosopher left him, saying: Strange that even in the errors of mankind the holy voice of the heart speaks to him, who has an ear to hear it, and yet more strange, that one cannot help respecting it even here!

23. THE ACORN.

To a pious old Brahmin there was born a great-grand-child. Full of joy for the blessing which had visited his house, he said: I shall go out and thank the Great Spirit and Father of Nature who has blessed us. Oh, that he would offer me the opportunity of honouring him by some good deed or other! Thus saying, he departed.

The blossom of pure joy is gratitude, and its fruit beneficence.

* These three animals are thought by the superstitious to portend a blessing.

With this lively feeling of veneration for the great beneficent Spirit, the old man went out into the fields under the shade of the trees. Each of his thoughts was a prayer. The drops of a freshly fallen rain still sparkled on the grass, the flowers, and the leaves. Nature seemed to him to grow young again, and more beautiful than ever, although he had already ninety times witnessed the return of spring. It is the work of the good Spirit, said he. To the man who reveres him, and in the creature recognises the Creator, it never grows old!

The aged Brahmin proceeded on his way, and found an acorn on the beaten path. The rain, by its fructifying influence, had already developed the germ: the outer shell was already cracked, but the germ could not take root in the hard, bare path. The old man stooped, took it up, and said: The foot of the traveller could easily have smashed thee, or the beams of the sun withered thee. Happy for me; I can here do a good work, and bring my inward feelings to completion by action, inasmuch as I further the intention of wise nature, which, with every breath, exhibits to us some deed of love. Even the least thankfulness is a sweet duty.

A youth, who stood behind the oak, heard the words of the Brahmin, and stepped forth, ridiculing and laughing at him. Wherefore laughest thou? said the old man to him. The stripling replied: At your childishness, my old fellow, that you can rejoice in having spared the life of an acorn.

Young man, said the Brahmin, how can you understand my mind, when you see me to-day for the first time? And wherefore do you ridicule the small tribute, which I think to render to nature? To her the seed is as valuable as the tree, and without the former the latter could not be.—Virtue also, my son, begins with the little, and from this grows up to the great. But the more nearly it approaches the original and perfection, the more it bows down in humility and simplicity. And then the least is as highly prized by her as the greatest. Does not Brahma too send down his sun and dew equally upon the grass and the palm tree? Thus spake the sage with a joyful earnestness.

The youth went off in silence and full of reverence. He had seen the noble old man in his dignity, and wished to be as he was; for even frivolity must in its heart respect virtue.

The Brahmin proceeded to a hill, all overgrown with thorns. A merchant met him, and asked: Do you think to rear up for yourself a tree out of the acorn? You will hardly enjoy its shade! The old man replied: In planting, must we only regard the shade of the tree and our own pleasure? Does Nature so? My son, he who has planted not only yesterday and the day before, who has had long experience, finds in the planting itself his calling and his pleasure.

He reached the hill, and on its summit, amongst the thorns, he planted the acorn, carefully covering it

with earth and moss. What! are you planting among thorns? exclaimed a shepherd who stood before him; you care little for your nursling. Friend, answered the Brahmin, whilst the young plant is delicate and small, the thorns will defend it against the rough winds and other exposures to injury, and, as it grows, it will work its own way through them; for it is an oak.—My son, this have I learned by listening to nature. The good mother thinks alike of the tenderness and the strength of her foster-children.

After the old man had finished his work, he returned joyfully to his home. Whoever, thought he, builds on the street, has many advisers! But experience pursues its own course!

As he drew near to his house, grand-children and great-grand-children sprang out to meet him, and asked: Where have you been so long? He gathered them all around him, and related all that had happened—and the little ones lovingly kissed him, as he told the story, whilst the elder ones hung upon his lips and listened intently. Oh, said the old Brahmin, when he had finished, there is no place more delightful than on the bosom of nature, where one in childlike spirit loves its Author, and in the circle of one's family, when we are there the object of filial love. Yes, thou lovely Brahma! he exclaimed, as he looked up to heaven, within the quiet circle of nature and of domestic life stands thy sacred temple!

The newly-planted oak soon grew out of the germ, and shot forth above the thorns, and became a densely shady tree. Then the old man died, and his loved ones buried him on the hill. And whenever they saw the tree and heard its murmurs in the breeze, down to the latest time, they remembered the life and the wise sayings of the Brahmin, talked together of him, and sought to be as he was. For the word of a wise man is like a seed sown in a fruitful soil.

24. THE PEACHES.

A countryman brought home out of the city five peaches, the choicest he could find. His children had never before seen the fruit. They, of course, were full of admiration, and delighted with the beautiful apples with blushing cheeks and soft down. The father then distributed them among his four children, giving one also to the mother.

In the evening when the children went into the nursery, the father asked: Now, how did you like the pretty apples?

Delicious, dear father, said the eldest. It is a delightful fruit, sourish and so agreeable to the taste. I have carefully preserved the stone, and will have a tree from it for myself. Well done! said the father, that shews a provident care for the future, as it seemed to the countryman.

I immediately eat mine up, cried the youngest,

and threw away the stone, and mother too gave me half of hers. O, that tasted so sweet, and melted away in my mouth. Now, said the father, you have not shewn much prudence, yet you have acted quite naturally and like a child. And for prudence there is space enough yet in life.

Then the second son spoke up: I picked up the stone, which little brother threw away, and opened it. Inside was a kernel, as sweet as a nut. My own peach I sold, and obtained as much money for it, as I think will buy me a dozen when I go to town. The father shook his head, and said: That indeed is calculating, but it was by no means child-like nor natural. Heaven preserve thee from becoming a merchant!

And you, Edmund? said the father. Free and open-hearted Edmund replied: I took my peach to the son of our neighbour, the sick George, who has the fever. He wished not to take it: but I laid it on the bed for him and came away.

Now, said the father, who has probably made the best use of his peach? All three exclaimed: Brother Edmund! Edmund sat in silence, and his mother embraced him with a tear in her eye.

25. THE BED OF PINKS.

O, dear mother, give us each a bed of flowers, which we can call our own; one to me, one to Gus-

tavus, and one to Alvina, and each one then can take care of his own!

Thus spake little Fritz to his mother, who granted his request, and gave to each of them a flowerbed full of beautiful pinks. The children rejoiced above measure, and said: When the pinks first bloom, it will be a glorious time! For it was not yet the season of pinks; the buds were only formed.

But little Fritz was impatient and could not wait for the blooming time. Besides, he wished his flower-bed to be in bloom before the rest. So he went out and handled the buds, and examined them in their envelopes, and was greatly delighted whenever he could discover a red or yellowish leaf of the flower already peeping out of the green encasement. But they were too slow in coming out for him. So Fritz broke open the buds and separated all the leaves. Then he called out with loud voice: See here, my pinks are in bloom! But when the sun shone upon them the flowers drooped, and mourned, and were shrivelled and faded before noon. And the boy wept over them.

His mother said to him: Impatient child! may this be the last joy of your life which you mar by your own fault. Then you have not bought at too dear a rate the difficult and important art of knowing how to wait patiently.

26. THE BEES AND THE BUTTERFLY.

An owner of bees took his young friend into his apiary, and pointed out to him the wonderful activity of the little community. Just then a splendid butterfly fluttered about. The brightness of gold, the blue of heaven, and the purple of the evening sky were all beautifully intermingled in his large wings. He alighted on a flower and then flitted away.

What a beautiful creature! said the apiarist, and it came forth too from a crawling caterpillar! The man's friend was surprised, and said: I thought your fondness for bees would have led you to have a heart only for your beehives, and to overlook the other gifts of nature!

Friend, replied the apiarist, I love the bees not from self-interest, not merely for the gain they bring me. Only the lower propensities contract the heart of man and make him partial in his views. But the more deeply he unites himself in love to nature, the more is his heart expanded, and his eye is lighted up for every thing beautiful and good around him.

But, proceeded his friend, the most brilliant butterfly is still not comparable with the industrious, useful bee.... Then the apiarist pointed to his buzzing hive, and said to his young friend: My dear sir, *here* you have the symbol of active life in its

restrictions, of the fettered spirit in its earthly operations. *There*, the symbol of the spirit evolved in its freedom and elevation above the dust. Therefore also the free minded sculptors of antiquity adorned the pure developed soul with the wings of a butterfly.

Certainly an appropriate emblem! replied the friend, but could not nature then unite the beautiful with the useful? Then answered the bee-owner with somewhat of displeasure: Shall then the Spiritual One and the Highest be always bound down to the earth, and the divine be sunk down to earthly ends? and thus degrade his nature!

27. THE SHEPHERD OF TEKOAH.

Amos, the shepherd and singer of Tekoah, came down from the mountains to Jerusalem, went in among the people and sang his splendid songs. And the people, although he reproved the sins and the slavery of Israel, heard him gladly; for he sang with power and grace, and adorned the strong and sober truth with the lovely images of the simple life of the shepherd. And his songs penetrated the hearts of the people.

Then went Amaziah, priest of Bethel, to Amos the shepherd; for he thought in his heart, Amos will instruct me in the manner of composing his songs, so that I may be able to sing as he does, and win over the people. And so he imagined he would

soon excel the simple shepherd of Tekoah in the art of song. Amaziah, however, was not a priest after God's heart, but a priest of the golden calf; and he flattered king Jeroboam and imposed on the people, so that he indulged himself to the full in his sensual appetites.

He accordingly went to Amos, and said: Who art thou, that thou speakest thus in splendid language, and the multitude hearken unto thee? Amos answered and said: I am a shepherd of Tekoah. Then asked Amaziah: How, then, has thy father so cultivated thy soul; or at what school of the prophets hast thou been taught this manner of song? The shepherd, Amos, answered: I am no prophet, nor a son of a prophet. I have spent the days of my youth with my father's flocks and gathered mulberries.

Then said Amaziah, with wonder: Who then imparted to thee the art of song, and taught thee to recite with such power? Amos replied: The Spirit of the Lord! And Amaziah inquired: In what temple did he appear to thee; and in what sanctuary reveal himself to thee? Amos answered, and said: In his sanctuary on the mountains of Tekoah, which extends to the ends of the earth! Amaziah was angry, and said: Thou speakest in dark words. I do not understand thee! And Amos replied: The spirit understandeth what is of the spirit. But Amaziah apprehended not the words of Amos the shepherd and sweet singer; for the Spirit of God

was not with him. So he betook himself to the king, and said: Amos is exciting revolt against you; and his preaching will ruin the country. Thus spake Amaziah; for he comprehended not the spirit which animated Amos. But Amos returned again to the mountains.

28. THE NIGHTINGALE.

Early in the morning, at the commencement of the harvest months, Sophron accompanied his father into the field. The lark was singing over their heads. A lovely bird! began the father. He salutes the first dawn of day with his joyful song, as also the gentle return of spring. He soars aloft, that all the world may hear his song, and ceases not until nature has perfected her creations.

The boy assented to the remarks of the father. But, he inquired, why does nature so quickly deprive us of the delightful, incomparable song of the nightingale? It is as if it had sung but a few days!

Unsatisfied! answered the father, smiling. Yet you are like the majority of mankind. Must, then, the most beautiful, which Heaven has sparingly communicated, serve only to render us more indifferent and colder towards the beautiful and the good, which he distributes to us in rich measure?

Not more indifferent, dear father, answered the youth; man then has only received a higher standard, and shall he not strive after the highest? Shall he

not regard the lower beautiful, but venerate and love the highest? Shall not respect for the beautiful lead him to veneration of the most beautiful?

Well! my son, said the father, I agree with you. I only spoke of the manner of men as it usually is, not as it should be.

After awhile Sophron renewed the conversation, by remarking: If, then, the most beautiful is the end at which men aim, why then does nature so soon deprive us of the enjoyment of the loveliest song? Do you remember, my loved one, how you felt, when you, for the first time, heard the song of the nightingale? O, said the son, how could I forget the beautiful evening? You were affected, proceeded the father, over the earnest and charming notes which nature has imparted to this delicate creature. The poetical conceptions of childlike antiquity, that the soul of an admired poet of primitive times has transmigrated into this little creature, seems to you truth;* for every tone appeared to you sentiment and thought—each the highest perfection in its kind.

O, well, my father, replied the youth, the more nearly we approach to nature, and the more our hearts are open to her language, the more readily do we apprehend the childish language of simple early times.

* According to Plato, the soul of Thamyris passed into a nightingale.

And after you had heard it some weeks, said the father, you then heard it gladly, indeed, and with joy; but still, not with that feeling—your ecstacy became gradually extinguished; you heard with more indifference. Is it not true, my dear? Was it not so?

The boy assented, and saw his father look surprised. The father, however, smiled, and said: This question was not, as you seem to think, superfluous. In order to be conscious of a right judgment about that without us, we must first have had a right and clear insight into ourselves. Would you not, perhaps, have gradually ceased altogether to be sensible of the great, the beautiful, and the pathetic of this wonderful song?

But, replied the boy to his father, the lark delights us all the spring and summer through with its friendly song. Well! my son, rejoined the father, the beautiful is a *necessity* of human nature; therefore benevolent nature never lets it fail us. But the most beautiful, the perfect, is something holy, which should lead us to the Divine, of which it is an emanation, and should not become common and profane. The former, therefore, she grants us *at all times;* the latter appears to us more seldom, that we may adopt it into our souls. Is it not true, that now, in this morning hour, the song of the nightingale is just such in conception, as it was to you on that first day in reality? The

youth nodded a friendly assent, and both walked side by side for some time in silence.

29. POLYCARP.—THE KINGDOM OF TRUTH.

The excellent Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, had, when persecution prevailed, left the city, and repaired with his faithful disciple, Crescens, to the country in the vicinity of Smyrna. In the cool of the evening he went out under the shade of a noble tree which stood in front of the farm-house. Here he found Crescens under an oak, supporting his head upon his hand, and weeping.

The old man stept up to him, and said: My son, why weepest thou? Crescens raised his head and replied: How should I but mourn and weep? I am thinking of the kingdom of God on earth. Storm and tempest are thickening around it, and will destroy it in its youth. Many confessors have already fallen off, and have denied and disgraced it; and thus prove that unworthy persons also profess with the mouth, although their heart is far from it. This fills my soul with mourning, and mine eyes with tears. So said Crescens.

Polycarp answered, smiling, and said: My dear son, the heavenly kingdom of truth is like a tree which a countryman planted. Secretly and quietly he deposited the gem in the earth, and went his way. It sprouted and shot up amongst the weeds and briars, and lifted its head above them, so that the

briars died of themselves; for the shade of the tree above caused them to wither away. But the tree grew, and the winds raved around it, and caused it to quake; so much the deeper did its roots strike into the ground, and fasten themselves about the rocks of the earth far down, while its branches reached up towards heaven. So the storm made it more firm. And when now it became higher, and its shadow was spread far and wide, the weeds and briars grew up again beneath it. But it regarded them not in its loftiness, and stood there in still and quiet state, a tree of God!

Thus spake the incomparable bishop; and then reached his hand to his disciple, and said, smiling: Why are you troubled, when you look up to its top, at the weeds which creep about its roots!

Then Crescens arose, and his spirit was serene; for the old man walked beside him, bowed with years, but his spirit and his countenance were those of a youth.

30. THE IMITATORS.

The spring had appeared, and the first nightingale was singing amid the shade of the fresh-leaved hazelbush. Menaleas, the pious shepherd, leaned against a tree, and listened to its song. A swarm of wild boys suddenly came up, gathered around, and listened a short time. Presently, however, they said to one another: Now it is our turn!

And they drew out a cup filled with water, in the form of a little bird, baked out of crude clay, in which there was a small pipe, which could be made to sound like the trill of a nightingale. They put this to their mouths, blew into it, and made a powerful whistling, in which they meant to imitate the nightingale.

But the nightingale was silent, and flew away into a lonely bush on a murmuring brook. And Menaleas, the good shepherd, followed it to the bush, and again enjoyed its song. The boys returned to the town, and made the streets resound with their piping; so that the people closed their windows against the din.

So together with admirable skill there easily springs up the miserable imitation.

31. ÆSOP.

Æsop, the incomparable writer of the charming fables of animals and plants, was severely beaten by his hard master, and driven out of the city into the wilderness. O, unhappy man! cried one of his fellow-slaves, as he was taken off. Unhappy! said Æsop: How more than yourself? What pleasure and joy then, rejoined the slave, can you expect in the desert? The feeling of liberty! replied the Phrygian; and he was driven away.

Some days after, some of his acquaintances went out to bury his corpse: for they supposed he would

have put an end to his wretched life. Æsop, however, sat content under a tree. They were astonished, and told him wherefore they had come. He smiled, and related to them the fable of 'The Wood-chopper and Death.' But, they inquired: What, then, was it that prevented the wretched, tormented Wood-chopper from following death, after calling for him. Æsop replied: The sweetness of his nature, and the hardness of his hands!

One of them remarked: We are truly surprised, Æsop, at your serenity and cheerfulness. Nature has denied you all that makes man glad; your body is maimed, and you can only breathe with great difficulty; your appearance is hateful: men ridicule you as soon as they look upon you, and will not suffer you even as a slave about them. And now, in this desert place, what can the gods give you as a compensation? Æsop answered: A participation of their divine nature! They taught me the language of animals, and conferred on me the creative power to cause them to speak.

You probably refer to your wisdom, began another of the number; and you seem to affirm that wherein nature fails on the one hand, she makes up on the other. Then must the fool first flee from himself, or execrate unrighteous nature, when he looks within.

He, replied Æsop, looks only without, and within he receives as a recompense the delusive bloom of folly—self-conceitedness.

Astonished, they left the cheerful sage. But before they separated, they inquired: Will you then bury your life and the treasures of your collected wisdom and experience in this wilderness? By no means, answered Æsop; I shall arise and go whither men most need wisdom and truth! Where then is that? it was asked. Where are the most priests, temples and altars, said he, and went to Delphi.

He had not, however, been long at Delphi, before the priests raised a great persecution against him, because he boldly spake the truth. They charged him with robbing the temple and cast him into a dark dungeon. But even here the little Phrygian was serene and merry, so that the jailer was amazed, and asked him: What in the world enables you to retain your serenity in this dark vault? Æsop replied: Satisfaction with myself.

But the priests released him from his prison in order to have him precipitated from the Phædriatic* rock. He, however, went on the way to death with perfect composure: and one of the people said to him: What influence is it fills your soul, that even in sight of death, you do not lose your courage and cheerfulness? The consciousness of innocence, and my past life! On this he was cast down from the rock and gave up the ghost!

* More probably from the rock of Hyampeæ.—Tr.

32. THE APPLE.

There was a rich man in king Herod's court, who was lord chamberlain, and clothed himself in purple and fine linen, living sumptuously and joyfully every day. There came to him out of a distant land a friend of his youth, whom he had not seen for many years. The chamberlain made a great feast out of respect to him, and invited all his friends. The table was loaded with various meats in gold and silver, and with many costly vessels of ointments, and wines of every sort. The rich man sat at the head of the table, and was merry. On his right sat his friend from the far distant land. And they ate and drank to satiety.

Then said the man from the far country to the chamberlain of king Herod: No such splendour and display are any where to be seen in my country, like this I see here! And he lauded all the magnificence of the feast, and praised him as blessed above all men on earth.

But the rich man, chamberlain of the king, took an apple from a golden dish, large, beautiful, and without like purple, and reached it to the stranger and friend of his youth, saying: See, this apple lies on gold, and its appearance is very fine. The stranger cut through the apple, and behold! at the core was a worm! He glanced sidewise at the

chamberlain; who looked down upon the floor and sighed.

33. THE DIAMOND.

A rude diamond lay many years in the dust, concealed among numerous common stones. Many persons walked over it, or trod it under foot without ever taking it up. Thus its brilliancy was hidden from the eye of the traveller. For the beautiful does not thrust itself forward, but shines in its simplicity.

At length a lover of nature came that way, looking for flowers and insects, and found this precious stone. Smiling he looked upon it, and said: Thou art always beneficent to thy worshippers, dear mother nature! Although he find not that which he seeks for with love and zealous desire of truth, he still finds something well worthy of his search.

He took the stone home with him. But, said he, thou unwrought child of nature—how shall I now begin to polish thee! How shall I remove the rough covering which conceals thy splendour?—Yet how should the precious be improved otherwise than through the precious? So he polished the diamond with diamond dust, when its incomparable brilliancy shone forth, and his fame resounded through the land.

The sage friend of nature therefore took the splendid precious stone to the well beloved prince

of the country, and said: I found this most noble production of nature, and polished it to this brilliancy, and now I bring it to the king of the country, that the diamond may adorn his crown! for it is looked upon as the highest ornament of a princely crown.

The prince, however, inquired: What then is the highest ornament of the princely throne? The philosopher replied: What the diamond is to the crown; that is, a circle of noblest men to the throne, which they surround, and to the prince who honours them.

34. THE TULIP-TREE.

A gardener came to another and brought with him various valuable plants and trees. They conversed of all manner of vegetables, of foreign and native growth, and of those which are green and blooming in colder climates, and called them by their own proper names, to express and to retain which is not in the power of every one. They went out into the garden, and there continued their conversation as they surveyed various plants and flowers.

Then the foreign gardener mentioned that he had raised a plant which was remarkable above all others, called the *tulip-tree;* for its blossoms are similar to the tulip in form; it is a native of a far, far distant land, and all other trees are not to be compared with it. So he praised the tulip-tree excessively.

The other gardener then desired greatly to become possessed of such a tree, and offered him the finest tree in his garden if he would send him one. So he returned home and sent him the tree.

When the tulip-tree began to put on its verdure, and to develope its buds, the gardener was full of joy, and spoke every where of his tree, and of the tulips he would soon have. The gardener, however, and all his friends, thought the tree must be of an exceedingly beautiful appearance, each flower of brilliant colours, with red and purple streaks, and the whole tree like an exquisite tulip bed of a thousand colours. For the foreign gardener had praised the tree in the highest terms.

So they waited in expectation, and the days and hours seemed to them very long, until the tree bloomed and put forth its buds. At length the buds appeared; but the gardener and his friends took no notice of them, for they thought the form of its blossoms must be very different. When, however, they looked and saw it really in full bloom, they valued its beauty very little, for it bloomed in modesty and simplicity; and they were displeased and very angry, and in their displeasure and for shame, they secretly broke off all the blossoms and buds, and tore them up, that they might not be laughed at by others on account of their boasting.

Thus ended the story. It teaches, however, that the unknown, and even one's friends, should not be overmuch praised and exalted before others. For

man is naturally unsatisfied, and expects the good to be the best, and the beautiful the most beautiful, and when he does not find it so, then he is displeased, and despises even the good and the beautiful, because they are not the most beautiful and the very best.

35. HANNA AND SULAMIT.

In the land of Israel, at the foot of the lovely Mount Tabor, lived a widow, named Hanna, with her only little daughter, named Sulamit. They were very poor, and dwelt in a small hut. But their hearts were joyful and serene, and their days flowed on peacefully. For they lived piously and feared God, and Hanna instructed her child in all goodness, and taught Sulamit that the love of God causes the plants to spring out of the earth, and sprinkles the dew upon them, and his sun to shine upon every thing that lives, and that he supplies man daily with numerous blessings. Besides, she narrated to her many beautiful stories and doctrines out of the holy Scriptures: and while thus engaged, the tears stood in her eyes. Then said Sulamit to her mother Hanna: Mother, you are crying! But her mother replied with a smile, and said: O, my child, His love is greater than the human heart can comprehend.

Thus they ofttimes conversed together, and as their words, so were their deeds. God blessed them,

however, and their little garden produced various fruits, as well as the trees which stood around the hut and spread up over the roof; so that they were able out of their abundance to distribute to others also, and to help the sick and the needy. Then said Hanna: Seest thou, Sulamit, that it is more blessed to give than to receive! Oh, happy for us, that we, even from our mite, can make an offering, and no one disdainfully turns away from us.

Thus they lived, serene and joyful in the quiet hut, and they beautified it, and cultivated their little garden with great industry.

But lo! there came a dreadful plague, and Hanna was very sick, in bed. Sulamit too, her little daughter, became sick of grief and anxiety.

Then the mother remarked that she must die, and with a smiling aspect and gentle voice, said: Dear child, my hour is now at hand, but be not distressed, only have confidence. The Father above will cause it to be well with thee. These were her last words, for she then lost all power of speech.

Sulamit wept bitterly, and kneeled down and lifted up her hands and prayed: O, thou dear father in heaven, leave to me yet my only dear mother! How shall I remain behind alone?

Thus prayed the little Sulamit, and angels bore the petition of the innocent before God in heaven.

Then the morning dawn blushed, and the Sun arose, and the roseate splendour of the new day streamed wild and lovely into the little chamber.

And Sulamit laid herself down on the bosom of her mother to keep her warm.

But lo! just then the angel of death drew near on a golden ray of the morning light, and released their spirits. So Hanna and Sulamit soared aloft, in the splendour of the morning sun, to the more beautiful world above.

36. THE LIGHT OF HOME.

A pilgrim hastened back from a far country to his home, with heart full of sweet hope: for he had not seen his dear parents and brothers for many years. Of course he was much in haste. But when on the mountains, night fell around him, and it was so dark that he could not see the staff in his hand. And when he came down from the mountains into the vale, he lost his way, wandered right and left, and was much perplexed, and sighed out: O, that some man might meet me, who would guide me out of my error into the right way; how thankful would I be to him. Thus he spake and stood still, waiting for a guide.

Whilst the lost pilgrim stood there, full of doubt and disquietude, lo! there glimmered in the distance a light flitting amid the darkness, and welcome indeed to him was its twinkling in the gloomy night. Blessings upon thee, he exclaimed, thou messenger of peace! thou informest me of the vicinity of human being! Thy dim glimmer seems to me amid

the darkness of the night as gladsome as the morning dawn.

He hastened with firm step towards the distant light, expecting to see some man carrying it. But behold, it was a jack-o-lantern, which, rising out of the marsh, was flitting over the stagnant pool. He, however, had reached the brink of an abyss: when suddenly he heard a voice behind him crying out: Stop! or you are a child of death!—He halted and looked around. It was the voice of a fisherman, calling to him out of his boat. Why, he asked, shall I not follow the friendly light! I am a traveller that has lost his way! Friendly light! said the fisherman. Do you so call the delusive light which allures the traveller to ruin? Infernal, wicked powers generate the nightly vapour out of the stagnant marsh, which imitates the glimmer of a friendly light. See how it flits hither and thither, the base offspring of night and darkness! While he thus spake, the deceitful *ignis fatuus* vanished.

The false light was extinguished, and the weary traveller thanked the fisherman for his salvation with heartfelt gratitude. The fisherman replied: Should one man leave another in error, and not lead him into the right way? We both have reason to thank God: I, that he selected me as an instrument of good to you—you, that things were so ordered that I should be in my boat on the water just at this moment.

Thereupon the benevolent fisherman left his boat,

accompanied the lost pilgrim some distance, and put him into the road to his paternal home. He now travelled on with cheerfulness, and before him in the distance the light of home glimmered between the trees with silent, modest gleam;—to him doubly delightful, as he had reached it through dangers and wanderings. He knocked, the door was opened, and father, mother, brothers, and sisters hung upon his neck and kissed him, and wept for joy.

37. LAZARUS.

When the Lord called his beloved Lazarus of Bethany from the sleep of death back into life, it was to him that arose, as to one who wakes out of a morning dream. He looked around and fixed his eyes on the grave-clothes which had fallen from him.

After they had gone into the house and were rejoicing together, Mary, smiling, drew near to her beloved brother, and said: Why did your eyes rest so thoughtfully on the grave-clothes, before you left the dusky light of the rocky tomb, in which you had slumbered? Your countenance was peculiar and full of import.

Then answered Lazarus: Mary, I was as one that dreamed. I knew not that my soul had returned to life, but I supposed that in a moment I should leave the earth, and soar away to the other world.

But, said Mary, the grave-clothes and the napkin

—how could these so attract your view? Lazarus replied: They seemed to me the earthly wrappings of my soul, which I, in the lively feeling of newly restored life, imagined myself to have just left.

How! said Mary, you considered the resurrection to new life as your release by the hand of death? The young man smiling, replied: Yes! and are not both *one*, Mary?

38. DAVID AND SAUL.

A spirit of disquietude and melancholy had come over Saul, king of Israel, and his heart was much troubled. Then said the servants of Saul unto him: Let us seek out a man who can play well upon the harp, that he may play before thee, and it will then be better with thee. Then said Saul to his servants: Look for a man who can play well on musical instruments and bring him to me. And they went and brought David, son of Jesse, the Bethlehemite.

When the king's heart was now heavy and full of restlessness, David stood before him, took his harp and played with his hand. Saul wept and his heart was lightened, and he became serene and cheerful. David too became a favourite with him, so that he made him his armor-bearer. Jonathan, however, David's friend, was amazed at the power of the musical instrument in the hands of the stripling.

Some time after, Saul became wicked, and the

Spirit of God departed from him, so that he opened his heart to envy and malice. When now the son of Jesse played the harp before him, he threw the spear in his hand at David, intending to transfix him to the wall. But David evaded the blow and escaped. Then said Jonathan, David's friend: What has become now of thy skill and the power of thy instrument? David answered and said: The power of my harp is the same, but the heart of my lord, the king, is changed. Before it was melancholy and full of sorrow: but now it has become malicious. How can the music of the harp still delight him?

39. THE MORNING DREAM.

A little boy named Leopold, came down from his bed-chamber in the morning, crying bitterly, and the glistening tears coursed down his cheeks. His father and his mother went to him to see what was the matter: for they thought some great evil had happened to the child, or that he was sick and felt violent pain and distress in his head or limbs. They asked the child: Dear child, what ails you? who has hurt you? Then the child opened his mouth, and said: Oh! I had a little while ago twelve clean white sheep, that came around me and licked my hand, and I sat among them with a shepherd's staff. But now they are all gone, and I know not where they are. So saying, he began again to weep bitterly.

The parents observed the trouble of the child, and saw that he had dreamed; and they secretly smiled on each other. The father, however, remarked: We indeed smile, mother, and yet our sighs and sadness are frequently the tears of the child, and our wishing and longing, are they not often like Leopold's dream?

Leopold was still, however, much distressed about the twelve sheep. So the parents consulted seriously as to what was to be done; and the father went to Polee, and said: Polee, I will go and look for your sheep. So he went out and bought a lamb and brought it home and put it where the child saw it. The boy was greatly rejoiced, and ran up and hugged the lamb, and said: Yes, this is it! this is it! it looked just so! He was so overjoyed, that he said nothing about the eleven other lambs, nor expressed any desire for them.

The father then smiled again, and said to the mother: In dreams and tears we grown people are like little Polee. May we only resemble him likewise in contentment and modest rejoicing in that which is small and moderate!

40. THE CUCKOO.

Old Conrad and his neighbour Paul, two laborious farmers, were standing together about Pentecost and surveying their fields. At the same time they conversed on various topics. For old Conrad passed

for a wise man in the whole region round about. He had visited many countries, and had experience in various things. And Paul was eager for knowledge and communicative, and asked many questions about one thing and another, which he wished to understand.

While they were thus conversing, the cuckoo cried in his usual way, and Conrad and his neighbour Paul listened to him with delight. Then said Paul: It is strange, always the same song, one everlasting repetition of the same thing, and nothing agreeable in the tone, and yet it is heard with pleasure! And when he first begins, one asks another in the village: Have you heard the cuckoo yet? and the boys in the streets imitate his notes: Yes, he even performs his part in the house clock, and causes his voice to be heard therein; and at the fairs one's ears are almost deafened with the imitations of his scream! So said Paul, and looked at his neighbour to see what he would reply to it.

Old Conrad answered: His song is certainly not specially pleasing, and rather to be called a scream, and yet we hear it gladly. But that can be accounted for. You see he sings only when the sun shines, and in warm delightful days, when the trees put on their verdure and bloom, and the fields promise the blessing, and he foretels to man the fertility of the year. So is piping welcome to the merry man, and the sayings of the rich and of great lords at full tables are always praised.

Paul smiled and said: But he is, and remains still, but a screamer, and has nothing lovely in himself. He never builds his own nest, and lives by burdening other birds, on which he imposes his eggs and his young. He meanwhile hops, the whole summer, from one tree to another, without intermission. I dislike him above all others, for his laziness. But when the cold winds blow, and winter draws near, what will become of him then? Bitter want will teach him another lesson.

Old Conrad then took up the discourse, and said: Don't be concerned! Do you not know what people say, that he is transformed during the winter into a rapacious hawk. Ah! said Paul, then he does like young Till. His parents let him grow up in idleness, and when the father died, he joined a band of robbers. And at last, proceeded Conrad, it happened to him as to the hawk nailed upon my barn-door.

While thus occupied in conversation, the two intelligent farmers surveyed their fields, rich in blossoms and fruit.

41. THE FAVOURITE FLOWERS.

Gustavus, Hermann, and Alvina, the blooming children of a man of large estate, walked out into the field on a fine spring day. The nightingales and larks were singing, and the flowers unfolded

themselves in the dew, and in the mild beams of the morning sun.

The children looked round full of gladness, and sprang from one hillock to another, and weaved themselves crowns of flowers. They also celebrated in songs the glory of the spring, and the love of the Almighty Father, who clothes the earth with grass and flowers; and they sang of flowers, from the rose, which grows on the bush, to the little violet which blooms in retirement.

So the spring of life and of the year appeared in lovely union.

Then said the children to one another: Let us each select a little flower, which he prefers before others! They were delighted with the proposition, and sprang into the field, to select the favourite flower. Then, in the arbor, we meet again! they shouted.

So the three children went their different ways in concord, to collect the beautiful. A lovely flower gathering!

They soon appeared again, all three, on the way to the arbor. Each one bore in the hand a full bunch of the selected favourites. When they came in sight of each other, they held up the flowers above their heads, and shouted aloud for joy. Then they met in the bower and unanimously concluded that each one should tell the ground of his choice.

Gustavus, the elder, had chosen the violet. See, said he, it blooms and emits its fragrance in modest

stillness, amid moss and spires of grass, and its work is concealed like the soft approach and blessing of spring. But it is honoured and loved of men, and praised in beautiful songs; and every one brings a bunch, when he comes out of the field, and calls the lovely violet the first-born of spring, and the flower of modesty. Therefore have I selected it as my flower. So saying, he reached Hermann and Alvina some of his flowers, who received them with inward satisfaction; for they were now besides the flowers of a brother.

Then Hermann stept forth with his bouquet. It was the delicate lily, which grows under the cool shade of the grove, and lifts up its blooming bells like strings of pearls, white as the light of day. I have selected this, as it is the emblem of innocence and of a pure heart, and tells me of His love who adorns the heavens with stars, and the earth with flowers. Was not the lily of the field honoured above all other flowers, in giving testimony of the fatherly love of Him, in whom all things live and move? That is the reason why I chose the small lily as my favourite flower!

Thus spake Hermann, and offered his flowers to Gustavus and Alvina, who received them with pious joy and respect. And so was the little flower consecrated.

Then came Alvina, the kindly, lovely little girl, with her gathered flowers. It was the blue, tender forget-me-not. These flowers, dear boys, said the

amiable girl, I found on the brook! They glisten like a bright star in the heavens, and sport in the clear water, on whose margin they grow; and the little rivulet flows along more beautifully, and as if weaving a wreath. Therefore is it the flower of love and tenderness; and I have selected it as my favourite, and transfer it to you two. So she gave it to her brothers with a kiss; and the brothers thanked her with a kiss. Then the guardian angel of the children smiled upon the amiable bond of innocence.

When they had thus selected their favourite flowers, Alvina said: Let us weave them into two wreaths and carry them to our parents! So they formed two beautiful crowns of flowers, and took them to their parents, and told them the whole matter, and about the choosing of the flowers.

The parents rejoiced over their good children, and said: A lovely crown! love, innocence, and modesty commingled! See how one flower exalts and adorns another; so that united they form the most beautiful crown of flowers!

But one thing is still wanting, answered the children; and with lively gratitude placed the crowns on father and mother. The parents were deeply affected with joy, cordially embraced the children, and said: Such a crown is still more glorious than the crowns of princes!

42. THE ROBIN-REDBREAST.

A robin, in the rigor of winter, flew against the window of a pious countryman, as if it wished very much to enter. So the farmer opened his window and took in the confiding creature; and then it picked up the crumbs that fell from his table. The farmer's children, too, became very fond of the bird, and valued it very highly. But when spring returned again, and the bushes and trees put out their leaves, the farmer opened his window, and the little animal flew away into the neighbouring wood, built its nest, and sang its joyful song.

And behold, when winter returned, the robin came again to the house of the farmer, and brought his companion with him. The farmer and his children were very glad when they saw the two birds, looking about out of their bright eyes most confidingly. The birds, said the children, look at us as if they wanted to say something!

The father replied: If they could speak, they would say: Kindly confidence awakens confidence, and love begets love!

43. THE DEJECTED SON.

There once lived a man, who possessed a splendid estate and fine gardens, and kept various kinds of animals, some for profit, and others for pleasure.

He had also a dearly loved son, whom he sent into a foreign land, that he might acquire information, and become improved in all manner of wisdom, and in the arts. After some years he returned home. His father was delighted, and made him a feast; but the son went about dejected, with sadness in his heart; for he thought within himself: My father does not love me and will neglect me!

His father was troubled about him and wondered what was the matter, and said: My son, do not go about mournfully, and let not sadness dwell any longer in your heart. Why should I forget thee and neglect thee! See how many servants, and how many kinds of plants and animals I nourish which bring me no profit; why, then, should I neglect you, who are of my own race? Thus spake the affectionate father: but the young man turned away from him, looked down upon the earth, and walked about depressed as before.

Then his father took him out into the beautiful garden to an arbor on an eminence, and addressed him thus: My son, from your youth up, you loved the beauties of creation, and the glory of the fields. There, for your pleasure, we have built this arbor, that you might survey the surrounding loveliness, and enjoy yourself. At the foot of the hill flows the rivulet, and here the nightingales sing and build their nests; and the glory of spring beams forth nowhere more gloriously than here; therefore, my son, be of a cheerful and joyful spirit!

Thus spake the tender parent: but the countenance of the youth was still sorrowful. He left the lovely hill, and his eyes fell again to the earth.

His young friends soon after called and were rejoiced to see him again. His parent, too, was glad, and thought that he would now cheer up, encourage his heart, and be joyful. He said to him: There, my son, there are the friends of your youth, who wish to see your face, and rejoice with you!

But the young man's countenance changed, and he became more dejected than before, and secluded himself from the friends of his youth. His father, however, followed him, and being much affected, said: Ah! my son, why do you treat me thus? Of what use to you are the wisdom and the arts of foreign lands, when you so disdain the delights of home? Enjoy in your youth the property of your father, the splendid gifts of nature, and the sweet discourse of friends who love you!

His son then raised his dejected eyes from the earth, and said: Alas! my father, I went from home with an innocent heart; but now I cannot look up. A sin lies heavily on my soul! So saying, he cast his eyes to the ground again; but his father paced the walk, and wept bitterly.

44. DIOGENES.

Alexander, the king and warrior of Macedonia, had left the Grecian sage, Diogenes, with the words:

If I were not Alexander, I would choose to be Diogenes! Only Parmenio, the chief commander of the king, remained behind by the tub of the philosopher. Strange remark of the general and king! said Parmenio. Not so strange, replied Diogenes. Only interpret it out of the language of princes into that of the people. Then it amounts to this: I feel compelled *to respect* the virtue of self-control and moderation; but my ambition will forever prevent me from *practising it!*

Parmenio, therefore, asked: Do you not then honour our king, or do you alone refuse him the title of the Great?

Diogenes. I also call him *the Great!*

To what, then, do you liken him, asked the hero.

Diogenes replied: To Mount Ætna, in Sicily.

The hero was astonished at the comparison, and inquired: Do you then suppose that ambition prompts him to the war with Persia? Diogenes answered: That burns in his veins.

Parmenio. But he proceeds thoughtfully and rationally. Cool reflection and the honour of his native land direct his movements. Behold the quiet on his countenance.

Diogenes. Snow and ice on the top of the mountain.

Parmenio. He will carry Grecian wisdom into India by his victories.

Diogenes. First flame and lightnings, then clouds of dust and smoke!

Parmenio. He will elevate Greece to the station of the most prosperous and most honoured nation.

Diogenes. Go to Ætna and to the Lipari Isles: they will teach you.

Parmenio. But the disciple of the wise Stagyrite will control himself and be moderate.

Diogenes. Do you know what the Sicilians say of Ætna?

Parmenio. I will hear it of you.

Diogenes. Encelados, the giant, after subduing the earth, wished to storm heaven. So the gods threw Ætna upon him. When he moves, Sicily quakes, and the wrath of his nostrils is the flame of the mountain.

Parmenio. And when will he cease to rave?

Diogenes. Whenever, undermined by his own flames, he consumes himself.

Then you probably would not take my field-marshal's staff in exchange for your mantle? said Parmenio, smiling.

Diogenes replied: Should I laboriously roll my tub up Ætna, in order to dwell on the margin of its crater? Thus spake the sage; and Parmenio went away in a thoughtful mood.

45. THE TWO TUBS.

One morning, when the sage Diogenes arose out of his tub, to behold the sun peering up from the sea, he was surprised to find, instead of one, two tubs

illuminated by the beams of the morning. A youth of rank had resolved to become a philosopher like the wonderful and despised Diogenes, and during the night had rolled his tub to Cenchrea. Well, my son, said the sage, I see that wisdom has found in you a disciple!

The youth smiled on receiving the approbation of the revered philosopher.

But Diogenes took his tub, rolled it to the sea, and tumbled it in. There it floated about on the waves. The youth was astonished. Then, said Diogenes, I have at last found in you a worthy disciple. Complete now the victory over self. Convey to me your possessions, and I will go and distribute them among the poor. The youth replied: I have something to set in order at home yet! So he left his tub behind and departed.

Then smiled Diogenes, and said: Simple men! they think the tub is everything! but they deceive themselves. How, then, can they be true towards others?

So saying, he got into his new tub. The distinguished youngster staid at home, ashamed of himself, and feeling that he had not until now taken the first step towards wisdom.

46. THE APIARY.

In a certain town there lived a humane, noble-hearted man, who was deeply affected with the

thought of the children of the poor growing up in so much ignorance, and passing their lives in idleness. And he said within himself: I shall see what I can do to remedy this! So he employed his knowledge and his substance in carrying out his fine plan. But the mass was too corrupt, the evil too great, and the powers of a single man too limited to accomplish the beneficent work. It failed.

Then men mocked the well-meaning man, and said: How handsomely has he finished his work! He has impoverished himself! Others said: His object was honour and gain; but he found shame and disgrace. Thus they contemptuously sneered at him: and even his friends forsook him; for they were parasitical friends.

The philanthropic man was troubled at this, and resolved to withdraw from the society of men, into some solitude. So he built himself a hut, and planted a garden, in a retired place, far from the crowd of the city. Here he enjoyed himself with the plants of the field, and the birds of the wood. But yet he was not happy; and he mused thus with himself: I need something by me, which will confidingly love me, and shew to me that truth and faithfulness which is so rarely found among men. For this purpose Heaven gave us that most faithful of animals. So he went and brought a dog into his hut, and gave him a name. Now he had an attendant and companion in his loneliness.

One morning, walking in the neighbouring grove,

he said to himself: I live on the bosom of nature, and yet there is a void in my soul. What can there be yet wanting to me? So saying, he saw a little bird tending its young in the nest. O! he exclaimed, a new intimation! Man must have something he can cherish with care! So he built an apiary near to his hut.

And now he sat whole hours and days in his apiary, wondering at the activity and industry of the little creatures; and every day he discovered new wonders in this active household and its operations, which filled him with amazement and delight. But he looked around for some one to whom he could communicate his thoughts and feelings. His dog looked kindly upon him, but he understood him not. Then he arose and went to the dwellings of the country people, who had bee-hives. They gladly received him, listened to him, waited on him, and learned of him; for he taught them much which they knew not before; and when he had finished his instruction on bees, he spoke of the high destiny and end of human nature. The country people believed him on both subjects, loved him, and praised him as their benefactor.

Thus nature and truth brought him back again to mankind, from whom an unnatural mode of life and error had estranged him.

47. THE GOLD-PIECE.

The only son and heir of a very wealthy man, on the death of his father, had struck off a large and splendid medallion. The gold proclaimed the merits of the deceased in many beautiful emblems and inscriptions.

On the day of the splendid funeral, the rich son and heir distributed a number of these costly medallions among his kindred and friends. All praised the generosity of the giver, the beauty of the medal, and the meritorious character of the deceased.

But not long after, on the occasion of a splendid feast, the rich heir heard, and soon also his friends and guests, that one of the poor relations had parted with the medallion presented to him. That is outrageous! exclaimed the rich son, rising up enraged from the expensively set table—outrageous! to put such a jewel into strange hands! I gave it from sympathy, but now I clearly see I have squandered it on a vulgar fellow. At the luxurious table of the rich man, there was but one sentiment of condemnation among the guests, and each one carried the report home and spread it through the city.

Then the condemned man himself came to the son and heir of the wealthy lord, with cheeks pallid and worn with grief; and thus he began his tale: A new misfortune robbed me of the little remainder of my property. Then affliction threw my wife

upon the bed of sickness, my poor innocent children cried for bread—I thought of the single, carefully preserved medal—I took it, and now says the world ——he could proceed no farther in the bitterness of his grief, and paused.

But the rich son turned away his face from him and left him.

48. THE FLOWER-GARDEN.

The delicate, innocent Theresa had been confined to the sick bed during the finest part of the spring. When she grew better and was gaining strength, she spake of the flowers, and asked whether they bloomed as beautifully as on the preceding year? She dearly loved the flowers, but was not able to go out and gather them. Then Erich, brother of the sick girl, took a basket and whispered to his mother: I will bring her the most beautiful in the fields! And so, for the first time, he went out to the country: for as long as the beloved sister lay in bed, he was unwilling to leave her. It now seemed to him that the spring had never been so beautiful, for he looked upon it and felt it with an affectionate and benevolent heart.

The joyous boy ran up and down the hills. The nightingales sang around him, the bees hummed, the butterflies fluttered, and the loveliest flowers were blooming at his feet. And he went on, singing and hopping from one hillock to another, from

one flower to another. His soul was serene as the blue heavens above him, and his eye sparkled like a pure fountain springing out of the rock.

At length his basket was filled with the most beautiful flowers, and on the top lay a crown of field strawberries, strung like pearls on a spire of grass. Smiling, the happy boy looked upon his full basket, and laid himself down on the soft moss beneath the shade of an oak. Here he silently gazed upon the scenery so beautiful in the glory of spring, and the thousand varied flowers, and listened to the changeful song of the nightingale.

But he had rejoiced and sported himself tired. Even the jubilee of the fields, and the song of the nightingale coaxed him to sleep. So he lay down beside his full basket, a lively image of the sensual pleasures, the satiety of which had exhausted him, and of their fading nature.

The gentle boy slumbered peacefully: when lo! a storm gathered in the heavens. Dark and silent the clouds rolled up: the lightnings played, and the voice of the thunder roared still nearer and louder. Suddenly the wind rustled in the branches of the oak, and waked the boy affrighted. He looked round on the heavens, covered with threatening clouds. Not a sun-beam illumined the plain. Presently a tremendous clap of thunder fell upon his ear. The poor boy stood as if stunned by this change in the aspect of nature.

Son of mirth, are you more secure in your joyous career?

Already the heavy drops of rain were falling thickly through the leaves of the oak. Then the affrighted boy snatched up his basket and ran. The storm was now impending over his head. The rain prevailed, and the thunder rolled frightfully; the water streamed down from his locks and over his shoulders. With difficulty could he proceed on his way. Suddenly a strong blast of wind caught the basket in his hand and scattered all his carefully collected flowers over the field. Then his countenance fell, and with angry displeasure he threw down the basket at his feet. Crying aloud and wet through, he at length reached the home of his parents.

Wise son of earth, is thy displeasure and the nature of thy wrath more becoming and kindly, when thy desire has not been met, or thy plan has failed?

The storm soon passed away, and the skies became clear again. The birds anew began their songs, the farmer his toil. The atmosphere became pure and cool, and a sweet calm reigned over hill and dale. The ground having just drunk up the rain emitted a delightful fragrance. Every thing seemed renewed, and wore the semblance of youth, as if nature had just come fresh from the hands of its benevolent Creator, and the inhabitants of the country looked up with thankful joy, to the distant clouds, which had brought blessings and prosperity to their fields.

Storms purify and sweeten the atmosphere; out of the dark cloud comes down the blessing of heaven —sufferings and trials tend to the ennobling and improvement of the sons of earth.

The serene sky soon allured the frightened boy again into the field. Ashamed of his indignation, he went quietly back to look for his thrown away basket, and fill it with flowers. He felt his own life, too, renovated. The breath of the cool air, the odour of the field, the leaves of the trees, the songs of the forest, all seemed to him doubly beautiful after the storm and the refreshing rain. And the shame resulting from a consciousness of his foolish and unrighteous displeasure, rendered his joy more modest and softened.

The joys of earth need the spice of bitter vicissitude in order to their preservation and enhancement. A proof of their earthly nature.

The basket was still lying on the slope of the hill. A blackberry bush had caught it and protected it from the violence of the wind. Gratefully did the boy look upon the bush, and loosen the basket. But how extatic was his joy and wonder, when he looked around him. The field glistened like the starry heavens. The rain had allured out a thousand fresh flowers, had opened a thousand buds, and pearled the dew-drops on the leaves. Erich strolled about, like a busy bee, and plucked the flowers.

The sun was now near going down, and the gladsome boy hastened home with his basket filled.

How his flower-treasure, and the pearly-crown of his freshly gathered strawberries delighted his soul! The setting sun threw around him the beams of his friendly face, while he hied away homeward. But yet more joyously beamed his eye, when he perceived the thankfulness and joyousness of his gentle sister.

Verily, said the mother, the joys we impart to others, are still the most delightful.

49. THE CANARY-BIRD.

A little girl, named Caroline, owned a most lovely canary-bird, which sang from early morn to evening; and was of an exceedingly beautiful golden hue, with black crest. Caroline gave it to eat seeds and cooling herbs, sometimes, too, a bit of sugar, and every day fresh clear water.

But suddenly the litle bird began to droop; and one morning, when Caroline took him water, he lay dead in his cage. Then the little girl cried heartily over the beloved creature, and wept sore. Her mother, however, went and bought another, yet more beautiful in colours, and as sweet a singer, and put it into the cage.

But the child wept louder when she saw the new bird, so that her mother was amazed, and said: My dear, why do you still weep, and distress yourself so much? Your tears will not restore the dead bird to life, and here you have another, certainly not

inferior to the former! Then said the child: Ah! dear mother, I have treated the little bird improperly, and have not done all for it that I should and could have done.

Dear Lina, replied the mother, you have certainly tended and nursed it with all carefulness!

Oh, no! answered the child; a short time before its death I did not take to it a bit of sugar you gave me for it, but eat it myself. Thus spake the little girl, with a troubled heart. Nor did the mother smile at the grief of the child; for she well recognised and respected the holy voice of nature in the heart of the girl.

Ah! said she, what feelings may harrow the soul of the ungrateful child over the grave of parents!

50. THE DEATH OF ABRAHAM.

When the days of Abraham, the man of God and hero of faith, drew towards a close, he laid himself down upon his quiet bed, full of years, and satisfied with life, and summoned his children and grandchildren; and they stood in a circle around him. Then the old man spake with serene aspect, and said: My children, the God in whom I have believed, now calls me to himself! and he blessed them. His children, however, wept, saying: O, that the hour might never come! But he replied: No, my dears! I have walked as a child *before him* all the days of my life in truth and love; why should

I now, when he calls, delay to go *to him?* So saying, he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. And the form of death was as if one slumbered.

51. THE SPIDER.

A child went out with his father into the vineyard, and there found a bee in the net of a cross spider. Already the latter was opening his threatening fangs to destroy the former. But the child liberated the bee, and then broke the web of the animal of prey.

The father saw and asked the boy how he could regard so little the wit and dexterity of the insect, as to destroy its toilsome and ingenious web. Did you not observe how beautifully and regularly the delicate threads were arranged? How, then, can you be at the same time so compassionate and so severe?

The child replied: Is not the wit of the spider malicious, and directed to murderous deeds? But the bee collects honey and wax, and stows them away in its cells; therefore I freed the bee and tore up the web of the spider.

The father commended the judgment of unbiassed simplicity, which condemns even brilliant wit, which, originating in self-seeking, tends to injury and ruin.

But, proceeded the father, perhaps you have still done the spider injustice; for see, he protects our

ripening clusters from the flies and wasps with his web, which he has spun around them.

But does he do it, asked the boy, for the purpose of protecting them, or rather to satisfy his own thirst for blood?

Why, certainly, answered the father; he has probably little reason to be concerned about the clusters.

O, said the boy, then the good which he effects, without intending it, is of no avail to his character. Good intention is certainly the only good and sole virtue in good deeds.

True! said the father; thanks then are due to nature, that knows how to apply the injurious and inimical to the maintenance of the good and the useful.

Then the boy asked, why the spider sits so solitary in his web, while the bees live together in social union, and work as a community. The spiders, too, ought to make a large common web.

Dear child, replied the father, only for good ends can a multitude associate. The bond of malice and selfishness carries the germ of destruction within itself; therefore, wise nature would not attempt, what men have so often found impossible and ruinous.

When they had returned home, the child observed: Yet I have to-day learned something from the hateful creature.

And why not? said the father. Nature has placed

the hostile and the friendly, the malicious and the good, side by side, in order that the latter, in contrast with the former, might appear the more beautiful and bright. And so man may learn even from that which is evil and malicious.

52. SOLOMON.

Solomon, the wise king of Israel, had sat on the throne of his father David for thirty years, and gathered all the treasures of the earth about him, and indulged in all the joys of life. One day the face of the sun was eclipsed, and darkness prevailed over the land some hours. But Solomon sat on a pinnacle of his palace, troubled in spirit, and his soul enveloped in darkness.

Thus he sat until the host of the stars was arrayed in high heaven over his head. And he lifted his eye to the star-spangled firmament, and said: The hosts of God roll on above the sun, all in everlasting brightness, and remain in unfading beauty without alternation of light and darkness; but the great light of day, which illumes the earth, has its spots and hours of dark eclipse; and the moon is ever changeful. And beneath the moon are the flickering shooting stars, and the undulating northern-light, children of a moment; and near the earth the illusive vapour of the bog skips about. Alas! ye joys of earth! sighed the king, death seeks to seize you, and yet extends his vision beyond the stars.

Thus he sat a long time gazing up to heaven, and then came down and proclaimed: All under the sun is vanity!

53. DUSCHMANTA.

Duschmanta was the richest among the kings of India, and his pomp and glory were unlimited. But he was proud and overbearing in his superabundance, shutting up his heart from the lower classes of his people, and only bowing his sceptre to the princes and nobles around his throne.

An old Brahmin who had been his teacher in his youth, in much trouble about this, left his solitude, sprinkled ashes on his head, and stood between the splendid pillars at the entrance of the royal palace.

The king saw him, and invited him to approach. Why, he inquired, do you appear in the emblems of deepest sorrow, and your grey head sprinkled with dust? The Brahmin answered: When I left you, you were the richest of all the rulers of India, who had before sat on your throne; for Brahma had abundantly blessed you, and with joy I left the house of my king and lord. Now, however, in my solitude, I learn that all your former fulness has vanished, and that the deepest poverty is now your lot!

Duschmanta heard these words with astonishment, and smiled: What fool, said he, has told you such

falsehoods? See this palace, the gardens of pleasure around it, the servants that obey my nod.

The old man replied: All this is only a delusion, which tries in vain to blind the eyes of the wise. India's ruler has sunk from his abundance into poverty!

The king stood amazed at the words of the wise Brahmin, and said: Who then is the voucher and witness, that has more influence than the glance of my eye and the touch of my hand?

Then the grey-head lifted up his voice and said: The sun, the image of truth under Brahma's throne, the clouds over our heads, and the fruit-tree before my hermitage, proclaim and testify to me your poverty.

Duschmanta was silent; but the old sage proceeded: That Brahma has adorned the king of day with everlasting fulness of light and heat, those beams testify, which stream forth, from his rising even to his setting, upon every blade of grass, and as well on my hut as on your palace, and are reflected from every dew-drop as from the sea. The cloud, when full, rolls over hill and vale, sending down its blessing and waters, in rich showers, on the thirsty clod of the valley and the hill. The fruit-tree bends down its branches loaded with blessings, to the earth. Thus nature asserts and proclaims abroad that Brahma has blessed her with abundance. You, however, are like a rock, whose fountain is dried up.

If this is not enough, Duschmanta, then ask yet

the tears of your people, and then boast of your riches in the presence of Brahma and his creation.

Thus spake the recluse, and returned to his hut. But Duschmanta laid to heart the words of the Brahmin, and became again the benefactor and blesser of his people.

Then one day he went to the hermitage of the Brahmin, called him out, and said: I dare now again appear in the beams of the sun, and before the presence of thy fruit-laden tree. But there is still one thing wanting. What, interrupted the Brahmin, can be wanting to the prince who is the blessing of his country and the father of his people?

To render the thanks of my heart, replied Duschmanta, to that wisdom which has guided me into the right way, and taught me that the glad countenance of the people is the only riches of the prince and leader. I had become poor, thou hast made me superabundantly rich again!

So spake the king: and the old man embraced him with tears of joy, and blessed him.

54. THE TWO WAYS.

A teacher, in a village on the Rhine, once stood in his school and taught, and the sons and daughters of the village sat around him and gladly heard his instructions. For his teaching was forcible and affectionate. He was on this occasion speaking of

the good and evil conscience, and of the gentle voice of the heart.

At the close of his discourse, he said to his scholars: Who of you can give me an appropriate comparison?

A boy stepped up and said: I could perhaps relate an allegory, but I do not know whether it will be correct.

Tell it in your own way! said the teacher; and the boy began: I compare the peace of a good, and the disquiet of an evil conscience to two roads which I once travelled. When hostile armies passed through our village, they carried off by force my dear father and our horse. As father did not return again, mother wept and mourned, and so did we all; and they sent me to the city to seek for my father.

I went, but late in the night I came back on my way with troubled heart, for I had not found my father.

It was a dark night in autumn. The wind blew and howled in the oaks and the fir-trees, and amongst the rocks. And the night-crows and the owls joined their cries and screeches. My soul was full of the thought of having lost our dear father, and of the grief of my mother, when I should reach the house alone. I quaked tremendously in the dark night, and every rustling leaf alarmed me. Then I thought that thus it probably was with that man's heart, who walks abroad with an evil conscience.

Children, said the teacher, on hearing this, would

you like to travel in such a dark night, after having sought a lost father in vain, and where you could hear only the voice of the storm and the howlings of beasts of prey? Oh no! they all cried out together, and shuddered at the thought.

The boy then proceeded and said: Another time I went the same road with my sister, when we were bringing a variety of pretty things from the city for a social party, which father was preparing for mother on the next day. We then also returned late in the evening. It was, however, a spring moon, a clear, beautiful sky, and all around us still and peaceful as in a bed-chamber, so that we could hear the running and ripling of the spring on the way-side, and in the bushes the nightingales were singing. We two went on, hand in hand, and were so delighted that we could scarcely express our joy. Besides, our kind father came out to meet us. Then I again thought to myself: thus it probably is in the soul of that man, who has done much good.

The boy closed his story, and the teacher then looked kindly on his children. They, with one accord, said: Yes! we will be good men too!

55. THE LITTLE BENEFACTOR.

It was a cold, severe winter. Little Minna, the only daughter of beneficent parents, gathered up the crumbs and fragments that were left, and preserved them. Then she went out into the yard twice

a-day and scattered the crumbs: and the birds flew down beside her and picked them up. But the hands of the little girl shivered with frost in the bitter cold.

The parents watched her and rejoiced in the lovely sight; and they asked her: Minna, why do you do that?

Every thing, replied Minna, is covered with snow and ice, so that the little creatures cannot find any food: now they are poor, therefore I feed them, as rich men support and nourish the poor.

The father said: But still you cannot take care of all of them! Little Minna answered: Do not all the little children in the whole world do as I do, just as all the rich certainly provide for the poor?

The father looked at the mother of the child, and said: O thou holy simplicity!

56. JOHN AND PETER.

John and Peter were once sitting together and talking of past times, when their Lord yet walked among them; and they came in their conversation to the anointing at Bethany. Then said Peter: Do you remember how earnestly he looked at Judas, when the latter said: Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor? And he looked kindly on us, although we assented to the language of Judas.

John replied: I asked the master, and he said to

me: The sentiments you expressed then, were not correct; but you did it in the simplicity of your hearts and sincerely, according to your real sentiments. Why then should I be displeased with you, and not gently instruct you? But to Judas was wanting the first of the virtues, truth. Thus he explained the matter. And, added John, did not Judas too shortly after betray the master with a kiss?

So the beloved disciple spake: and in the ardent Peter's eyes stood the bright tears; for he remembered that he too had once been faithless to the truth.

57. THE SHEPHERD OF THE PEOPLE.

Samuel, judge in Israel, was distressed about Saul, whom he had anointed king: for he did evil and governed the nation badly. Then came the word of the Lord unto him, saying: How long wilt thou suffer because of Saul? His reign will soon come to an end. Go therefore to the sons of Jesse, and choose the one worthy to be a shepherd of the people.

And Samuel went to Bethlehem, and saw Jesse's sons, and preferred Eliab, because he was finely formed and of a large person. But the spirit of the Lord prevented him, and said: Man looketh upon the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh upon the heart!

Then was Samuel perplexed, and studied the

hearts of the sons of Jesse, in order that he might select the best. He asked Jesse whether those were all his children, and Jesse replied: There is yet one, the youngest, and lo! he tends the sheep on the mountains.

Then thought Samuel: I will study his nature and his heart, before he comes in, that I may give a good leader to the people! So he went out to the mountains and concealed himself in a cave. And David was watching the herds and flocks where Samuel could see him.

And behold, there came a lion and a bear out of the mountains: and the lion carried off a sheep out of the flock. The youth sprang after him, seized the lion by the beard, rescued the sheep from his jaws, and slew him. Afterwards the bear in like manner.

Samuel stood amazed at the power of the youth, and wondered within himself: but still he tarried and doubted, saying: I indeed have seen the strength and courage of the youth, but the Lord looks upon the heart! So he watched him farther. And behold, the brown shepherd sat down on the hill, took his flute out of his pouch and played various tunes to the sheep. His dog lay quiet beside him, the breezes played in his locks, and the lambs gathered around their shepherd. So he sat among them and played on his pipe. And when he ceased, the sheep pressed up to him, licked his hand and his shepherd's staff, and reposed at his feet.

Then Samuel doubted no longer, but exclaimed: Happy am I, that I have found a man, chosen for the shepherd of men! for in him there is both power and gentleness. And the word of the Lord came to Samuel and said: Arise and anoint him—he is the one!

58. SOLOMON AND NATHAN.

Nathan, the wise teacher of the youthful Solomon, was much troubled about his scholar, and sad at heart. For Solomon was too fond of wine, associated with wicked boys, and drank with them, even to drunkenness, so that his words were profane and obscene. Nathan mourned over it, for he was aware of the fine talents of the youth, and that he was destined one day to rule the nation.

But Solomon forgot the instructions of the godly prophet, and spent his days and nights in drunkenness.

One morning a messenger came to him and said: Behold, I was going by the vineyard of my lord, the king, when I saw a boy violently tearing the vines from their props, stripping off the leaves, throwing the vines to the earth, and trampling the precious clusters in the dust. Solomon's wrath was roused against the boy, he took his sword and ran to the vineyard, crying out: With his blood shall he pay for his scandalous mischief in destroying the choice fruit!

Thus he exclaimed in the anger of his soul, when Nathan approached him, and asked the youth: Against whom are you raging so, sword in hand?

Solomon told the wise Nathan the message he had heard about the destruction of the vineyard. Then said Nathan: And you are enraged at it, and your countenance like the flashing eye of the young lion! Solomon replied: Should I not punish the scoundrel who robs the most splendid gift of nature of its decorations, and treads that fruit in the dust which Heaven has provided for the gladdening of man's heart?

Then said Nathan, with deep feeling: O Lemuel, put up thy sword into its sheath! I am he who sent thee the message. The vineyard has suffered no harm. But to Solomon do the people look as to a blooming vine, and expect joy and blessings from him. Yet Solomon is annihilating whatever of the lovely there is in him, that God has conferred on him, and perverts the wisdom of his soul by his excesses! Wilt thou then any longer be as one who sleeps in the midst of the sea, like a man who slumbers on the mast-top?

So spake the wise teacher of the youth, and Solomon reproached himself; and when he looked on the wine as it sparkled so beautifully in the cup, he thought of the vines which the wicked boy trampled in the dust, and forsook his former ways, and the Lord gave him wisdom and understanding.

59. MAN AND WOMAN.

When the first father of the human race, and his wife, the mother of all the living, had left the lovely garden of Eden, they mourned many long days, and said to each other: What now will be our way upon earth, and who will guide us? Then they went to the Cherub with the flaming sword, that guarded Eden, Eve leaning on her husband, and retiring behind him, as they approached the heavenly watcher.

Adam wept and said to the Cherub: Alas! the inhabitants of heaven will no longer walk with us as formerly; for we have become unholy because we have sinned. Do thou therefore pray the Creator of the world in our behalf, that he would send down one of the angels, his ministers, who guide the stars in their orbits, to lead us into the right way.

Then the earnest Cherub answered: Man has the star *within himself*, which exalts him, though fallen, above stars and suns, which revolve in the heavens. Follow it!

But Adam wept anew and said: O, thou profound servant of Jehovah, do thou give us a symbol on which we may look, and which we may follow, so as not again to fail from our course. For once enticed from good, our eyes and ears are easily closed against the light and the voice of the inner

man. Point us then to an image, with which to compare our course!

Then the thoughtful Cherub thus spake to Adam, the man: When the Eternal formed thee out of the dust, and in the beam of the morning light breathed into thee the breath of life, then thou didst lift up thy manly head towards heaven, and thy first look was upon the sun. Well then, let it be the type of thy course! With joyful aspect it enters upon its high career and begins its daily work. It strays neither to the right nor to the left, but goes on its way, shedding down light and bliss. It smiles at the storm raging under its feet, and comes forth with more beautiful countenance from beneath the clouds that enveiled it, and closes its heroic course, rich with blessings, in the splendour of its glory. Grave man, let this be the type of thy course on earth!

So spake the Cherub, and the son of the dust bowed himself before him and was silent.

Then the gentle mother of the race, with blushing face approached the heavenly messenger, and wept with tender, pathetic voice: O, thou holy one, impart also to me a word of consolation and instruction! How could weak woman look up to the lofty, splendid star of day, and walk in his way? So Eve wept, and the Cherub pitied tender woman, and with smiling aspect, said: When the all-bountiful formed thee, and breathed the breath of life into thy bosom in the twilight of evening, then thou didst

not look up to the heavens, but thine eye rested on the plants and flowers of Eden, and upon the odorous earth and the fruit-laden trees of the lovely vale, and the bubbling fountain which flowed out through it. So let thy work be like the quiet goings of motherly earth! She wends her peaceful way on without noise and dazzling splendour. Still and unobserved she brings forth her grasses, plants and trees, fountains and rivulets out of her fulness. Gently and unnoticed she cherishes and nurses on her bosom her children to blooming and fruit, and her own creations are her ornament! Gentle woman, let this be the type of thy course on earth. And your bond of union, man and woman, said the Cherub, let it be the delicate bond of the heavenly lights!

Thus spake the Cherub: and there arose a soft balmy breeze from Eden, and the Spirit of the Lord was in the breeze, and confirmed the words of the Cherub.

Adam, and Eve, his wife, threw themselves upon their faces and prayed, and Eve trembled much and wept.

60. ASAPH.

Asaph, the celebrated singer and player on the harp, sat, at the hour of midnight, in the upper chamber of his house. His harp stood before him, shining in the moonbeams, and his countenance

glowed; for he thought of a hymn of praise in honour of the Lord, who made heaven and earth, and all that therein is. Thus sat Asaph in deep reflection; and his harp lay silent before him.

Then he thought: I will go out to the top of the roof, to view the glory of the starry heavens. My song, too, will then sound more gloriously.

So saying, he took his harp up to the top of the house, and contemplated the heavens, Orion, and the Great Bear, the Pleiades, and the southern constellations, and the whole host of heaven, that silently rolled over his head in everlasting brightness. And beneath lay the holy city, the vales and the mountains in the light of the moon, while men slept in the still quiet of midnight.

The breath of midnight played on his harp, and the strings vibrated. But Asaph was speechless and silent, and leaned his head upon his harp and wept.

And when the day dawned, and the people went up to the sacred mount, and the noise and bustle of busy men filled the air, then Asaph arose, went down, and played vehemently on the strings of the harp. And his spirit soared upon the wings of song above the noise of the people.

61. ELIAB.

In the holy land there lived a man, named Eliab, whom God had blessed with earthly good. He was

likewise well versed in the wisdom of the east. But all this failed to bring peace to his spirit. So he often walked mournfully, and wished for death. For he said: What is life but an everlasting round of vicissitudes, and yet an incessant repetition of the same thing. Man lives in perpetual conflict; and his days are as the days of an hireling.

A man of God came to him, and directed him to a plant of uncommonly healing virtues. But, said Eliab, of what use is this to me! My body is not diseased, my soul is sick; it were better for me to die.

It will do your soul good! said the man of God. Take this herb and heal with it seven poor sick people; and then, if you please, you may die. And Eliab did as the man requested, and sought out wretchedness in hovels. He cured seven sick persons, and bestowed of his goods on the destitute.

Then the man of God came to him again, and said: Here I have brought you a deadly herb: now you may die! But Eliab exclaimed: No, God forbid! my soul no longer pants for death; for I have now discovered the meaning and import of life.

The man of God smiled, and said: I thought it would be so; for now, through your beneficence, you have become acquainted with your godlike nature, before concealed from you! How could you, then, still think selfishly of the earthly life and its instability?

Then said Eliab to the man of God: Thy wisdom

has restored peace to my soul! but my deeds seem yet only small and insignificant. I am able to extend to the poor and needy only the external—only to lighten up their hovels with joy, by my abundance; but I have no access to their hearts.

It is well for you, replied the man of God, that you communicate your gifts with an humble mind; therefore shall the higher also be given you! So saying, he took Eliab into his garden to a rose-bush. There was a great dearth in the land; and the rose-tree, growing in sandy soil, looked withered, and its buds hung down to the ground. So the man of God directed Eliab to go to the spring and fill a vessel with water. Eliab did as directed, and watered the rose. The bush revived, its leaves became green again; and after awhile the buds came out and bloomed, and breathed around a delightful fragrance.

Behold! said the man of God; so the poor man revived, breathing out thankfulness and love, lifts up his countenance to God, and looks around amongst men with joyful confidence; for you were to him a friendly messenger of God and humanity.

How, then, must I communicate my benefits? asked Eliab. The man of God replied: Humbly, as a man, and invisibly, like God.

But when I stand before him, and he would render me thanks? Then, answered the man of God, let your hand be the hand of a brother, and let the

breath of your mouth open to him the inner heaven of your heart, which prompts the good deed.

62. THE SHEEP-SHEARING.

A mother took out her little daughter, Ida, with her to see a sheep-shearing. The little girl cried very much, saying: Oh, how cruel the men are to torment the poor creatures so!

No, my dear! said the mother; the good God has so ordained, in order that man might clothe himself with the wool; for he is born naked.

But, said Ida, then the poor sheep must freeze.

Oh, no! replied the mother; he gives to man the warm covering, and sends to the shorn lamb the mild summer air.

63. THE DAWN.

Early in the twilight of the morning, the sage Hillel walked out with his disciples in the vicinity of Mount Hermon. They talked together of faith, of the higher world, and of divine wisdom.

Then asked his disciples: Rabboni, to what dost thou compare the divine wisdom?

Hillel lifted his hand, and said: Behold! there shines its symbol, the morning dawn! Fog and mist still lie upon the hills and vallies, and earth rests in silence waiting, while the gates of heaven are now quietly and gradually unfolded.

We understand, said the pupils; it comes from above, and takes up its abode with quiet, believing humility.

Again Hillel lifted his hand to the morning twilight, and said: See, it now bows itself down to the dark, slumbering earth. Already it pours forth over hill and vale a soft, lovely light; and inanimate creation shines in more than earthly splendour.

Nature grows in signification and import! said the disciples.

Behold! said the teacher, how its gently undulating stream of light rests densely on earth, like a band that unites earth with heaven.

Man with God! softly whispered the disciples.

It does not, indeed, give out the brightness of day, nor does it shed around a solemn darkness; but it announces, with its mild light, the source of day, which retires behind its veil. We night-wanderers look up to it with confidence and joy, for we know it promises the day.

You perceive how fragrantly Hermon smells and renews his strength; the plants grow green, and the buds bloom in the light of the dawn. The dew, distilled out of its bosom, fell gently down on earth; and see how it now sits sparkling on every leaf and blade of grass, like the pearls of the Orient.

So faith begets love! whispered the disciples.

Light and strength, too! observed Hillel. Lift up your eyes, he proceeded, as he pointed towards Aurora; she now sends forth the youthful sun.

Nourished on her maternal bosom, and his head crowned with her golden beams, he enters on his course full of strength and courage. Clouds and storms do not drive him back.

An image of the man whose heart is filled with divine wisdom, cried the disciples.

On his high, heavenly way, proceeded Hillel, he goes on in quietness and strength, and dispenses a thousand-fold blessings, a son of Aurora.

When he has finished his course, just before the approach of night, she comes again as the evening twilight, and receives him with motherly embrace.

64. PATMOS.

When St. John arrived on Patmos, after his banishment by the crowned tyrant, he threw himself down upon a rock, and sighed and wept till late in the night; when suddenly a light broke in upon the darkness, and Raphael and Salem, the two guardian angels of the beloved disciple, appeared before the weeper, all surrounded by a bright red halo. The grey rock reflected the light, like a cloud in the evening twilight.

What troubles you, John? asked the heavenly visitants. He replied: The events of the day lie heavily on my soul. The tyrant murders the confessors of the truth, the friends of the Risen are ground to pieces, and I am compelled to be far away from them.

Salem smiled, and said: Didst not thou stand upon Golgotha, when the Crucified bowed his head, and after three days at the empty sepulchre?

I know well, answered the Apostle, that the truth will come forth victorious from the conflict. The gates of hell shall not prevail against it. But this separation from the martyrs and witnesses for the truth, which I love—Alas! I see only the afflictions of the present time.

Come, come! said Raphael, although present events rest so heavily on thy spirit—the wings of the seraph, indeed, I cannot give thee, so long as thou walkest yet in dust, but thou wilt not need them.

Thus spake Raphael, and touched the forehead of the exiled. Then his eye brightened, and he looked through the dark clouds into the sanctuary of heaven, heard the music of the spheres, and saw the truth shine triumphantly in its heavenly splendour.

But Salem reached him the harp and conferred on him the sweet gift of song.

Then the rocky sea-girt Patmos no more confined the inspired one.

65. BUTTERFLY.

Little Rodolph came springing out of the garden in a rapture of wild joy, and exclaimed: What a beautiful little bird I have caught! It sat upon a

flower, and its wings glistened like fine gold and silver, and even more brightly! So I walked up softly to it, caught at it, and then I at once had it! Now I will watch it well, and it shall not get away from me; and I'll give it bread and milk to eat. Thus spake little Rodolph.'

Then said his father: Well, Rudeli, let us, too, have a chance to admire your captive! Thereupon the boy thrust his hand hastily into his bosom and pulled out a beautiful butterfly.

But lo! the wings of the little bird had lost their brilliancy; the variagated dust of the wings stuck to the fingers of the child, and the delicate pinions were all smashed.

So the boy cried bitterly, and said: O, how miserably has the thing become disfigured! It does not look at all any more like the bird that sat on the lily! Fie on them! that they are so fragile. So saying, the child threw down the butterfly, in anger, to the ground.

But his father said: With what are you displeased? Is it the little bird's fault that it is delicately formed? You laid rough hands upon it; therefore its brilliant wings and its flower-like life faded away.

66. PRAYER.

Cornelia was the joy and the pride of her parents; for she was lovely to look upon as the beams of light; and her cheeks bloomed like the young rose,

when it first opens to the dew. Moreover, her spirit was pure as a morning of spring, which sweeps over the blooming vales, and proclaims a joyful day.

Cornelia had not yet known the sternness and weariness of life; and the days of her youth were serene. But lo! her mother, after confinement, sickened, and lay many long days until she grew very feeble; for the fever was high, so that it made her delerious. The little girl watched, night after night, by the bedside of her mother, and comforted her, and walked softly about her with gentle carefulness and secret anxiety.

On the seventh day the fever rose higher than before, and there was stillness in the chamber and secret weeping; for every one believed her nigh unto death.

But with night came the long looked for slumber; the mother revived, and life returned to her. Cornelia sat on the bed, and listened to her breathing the whole night; and her soul was anxious with hope.

When day dawned, the mother opened her eyes, and said: I am better—I shall recover! And she eat and drank, and slept again.

And the little girl's heart was overflowing with joy. So Cornelia went softly out of the chamber, and skipped out into the fields, and stopped on a hillock at the dawning of the day. Here she stood, oppressed with various conflicting feelings of despondency and hope. Aurora now appeared, and her countenance beamed all around; and Cornelia

thought of the renewed life of her mother after the refreshing slumber, and of the fearful anxieties they experienced. But she could no longer restrain the fulness of her heart's feelings. She knelt down on the flowers of the hill, and bowed her face towards the earth, and her tears mingled with the dew of heaven.

Then she arose and returned home, and went into the chamber of her mother. Cornelia was now more lovely than before: for she had communed with God.

67. THE FOUNTAIN OF HEALTH,

OR THE HISTORY OF BARUCH.

At Damascus, in the land of Aram, lived a man named Baruch, who was celebrated throughout the whole country for his wealth, so that people said: He is justly called Baruch; which, being interpreted, means *the blest;* for he possessed the treasures of India and Arabia, and dwelt in a splendid palace, whose foundation was of polished marble, and adorned with costly tapestry; and of his riches there was no end. God had given him, besides, a noble wife, and seven blooming children.

But, behold! there was neither peace nor joy in his heart. He therefore strove daily to augment the glory of his house, and to exchange the beautiful for the most beautiful. But still, notwithstanding, he had no peace in his spirit, and was ever unsatis-

fied, so that sleep departed from his eyes. Then he said in his heart: What is life to me? It can be nothing higher nor better than I possess from my youth up; and I now know that all under the sun is vanity, and my soul is disgusted with every thing.

So Baruch went about with heavy heart, and troubled his wife and his whole house, so that they said: An evil spirit haunts him! He therefore thought of putting an end to his days, in order to get rid of the torment.

Then Baruch heard that, in Memphis, a city in the land of Mizraim, there lived a wise man, a prophet, to whom God had given wisdom to counsel in all matters. And Baruch concluded to set out and consult him.

So he called his most faithful servant, Malchi, and said: Go, prepare me two camels, and load one of them with money, silver, and precious stones, and the costly spices of Arabia! And Malchi did as his lord commanded. Then Baruch blessed his wife and his children, and arose, he and his servant, and went thence over the mountains through the desert to Mizraim.

So they travelled seven days' journey with their animals, and seven days more in the desert, but still they reached not the land. For the angel of the Lord had struck them with blindness, that they lost their way, and knew neither the right nor left. And they and their camels became very thirsty: for there was neither fountain nor well in the desert,

far and wide, and they collected the dew of the night on their mantles, and sucked it up to moisten their lips.

Then sighed Baruch and said: Would I not gladly give all the treasures which the camel carries, and yet much more out of my vaults in Damascus, for a cup of the water which bubbles up out of marble and porphyry in my garden; and all the choice wines in my cellar for a little fountain, that would cool and refresh our tongues.

Thus sighed Baruch, and the day was very sultry, the heat prevailed, and they became still more thirsty, so that their souls fainted within them. Then they slew one of the camels, but found scarcely any water in him wherewith to quench their thirst.

Baruch then opened his mouth and said to Malchi: Oh, my faithful servant and companion, have I brought you here to die on my account! To my family at home I was a plague by my ugly disposition, and now to my faithful Malchi I am an angel of destruction in the desert! And yet you are patient as a lamb, that opens not its mouth before its slayer, and you murmur not against your destroyer, who, in return for your faithfulness, brings a curse upon you! Oh, Malchi, how shall I requite thee? Thus spake Baruch.

Malchi answered and said: Why should I not cheerfully follow my master, even unto death? Have I not to this day eaten your bread and drunk your wine? Have I enjoyed good days, and shall I

refuse the evil? May the Lord only save you out of this strait, and take my life as a ransom. I am but a single man, while for you a wife and seven children mourn. When Malchi had thus expressed himself, he could proceed no farther; for his spirit was faint, and he sank down to the earth.

Then Baruch broke his heart and fell upon his face in his grief, and wept, saying: Lord, Lord, God of heaven and earth, destroy me, for I am not worthy of the favour thou hast shewn me, and the burden of my sins rests heavily upon my soul! Therefore destroy me, as my deeds deserve. And after Baruch had thus spoken, he was silent, and wept sore.

Lo! there came a rippling noise from a distant rock, like unto the bubbling of a little fountain. And Baruch raised his head to heaven, and the camel too raised his head, and turned his ear towards the noise, and went to the rock. And Baruch exclaimed: Will the angel of the Lord then perform a miracle, and open the rock in the midst of the desert, to rescue us from death?

So said Baruch and hastened thither; and behold! at the bottom of the rock there sprung up a fountain of pure water, which flowed out cool and abundant, and beautiful was it to look upon.

Baruch then fell again upon his face and wept and cried: O, Lord God, now know I of a truth, that thou art merciful and of great goodness, and doest

wonders, although I am utterly unworthy of thy compassion!

Baruch, however, drank not out of the fountain, but quickly brought a vessel and filled it, and ran over to his servant Malchi, bathed his temples and moistened his lips. Malchi opened his eyes and looked up to his master. And Baruch fell upon his neck and wept for joy, exclaiming: O, Malchi, thou friend of my heart, no more my servant! How glad am I that I found thee! Behold, the angel of the Lord has shewn us a fountain! Drink now, and refresh thy spirit, that thou mayst live, and I also live!

And when Malchi had drunk, he was revived, and Baruch helped him to the fountain; and they took from the camel of the victuals which they had brought along, and sat down in the cool of the fountain, and ate and drank and were satisfied. They watered their beast also, and rested from their troubles, and their spirits were revived and comforted, and they were of good courage. There they remained until the next day.

When the sun arose, Malchi spake to Baruch, his lord: Lo, the sun is up. If thou pleasest, I will fill the leathern bottles, and let us go on to the prophet in the land of Mizraim, towards the west. We cannot be far from the place now.

Then Baruch smiled on his dear servant Malchi, and took his hand, and said: Not so! behold, the Lord has given me the wisdom which I sought. What need have we of the prophet in Mizraim?

We will return in the morning eastward, by the way which we came.

They then filled the bottles with fresh water, gave the camel drink, and drank themselves, and blessed the fountain, which had saved them from death, and went joyfully on their way.

When they reached home, at Damascus, Tirza, the wife of Baruch, was sitting before the door of the house, with her seven children, under a palm-tree; and they were all amazed when they saw Baruch and his servant Malchi. But Baruch embraced his wife and children, and wept for joy.

Then Tirza lifted up her voice and said: Blessed be the wise man of Mizraim, who sends you so soon home again, and blessed to me be Baruch, my beloved! For lo, thy form is changed, and thy countenance shines upon me like an angel of peace. Tell me the name of the man of God, who has called back peace into thy spirit, that I may bless him!

And Baruch smiled and looked upon his wife, and related all that had happened to him and Malchi. Then he added: Behold, neither a man nor a prophet, but the Lord himself, has instructed me. In the desert have I learned humility: in the fountain of water have I perceived the grace of the All-merciful and his goodness, and in my servant found a man and a friend! And now I come back to you renewed, and a peace dwells in my breast, which is

worth more than gold or silver, and which my wealth could not buy for me.

Thus spake Baruch, and his course was friendly, honest, and upright, even to the end of his days. Out of his treasures he dispensed good all around him throughout the land, and no poor man was found who was not aided by him in his poverty. And the destitute, whom he relieved, said: Well and truly may he be called Baruch, for he is one blessed of the Lord, and himself a dispenser of blessings.

But he said: This too have I learned from the fountain.

After the expiration of a year, he visited the fountain with his friend Malchi, and his wife and children, and consecrated it, and built near it a house for the pilgrims of the desert. And he called the fountain *Beor Refah*, which means, the fountain of health. So it is called even to the present day.

68. ALCIBIADES AND SOCRATES.

Alcibiades was joking one day, as he sometimes did, with his beloved teacher Socrates, and said: You are indeed the most wonderful of all men. All Athens, except the sophists and your enemies among the avaricious and unrighteous demagogues, call you *the wise*. And even these secretly believe you to be so, although unwilling to confess it. Now I have long thought of learning of you the art, by

which you so operate on men, that they all honour you, even those who hate and shun you not excepted. But all my efforts after it have been fruitless. For you always slip out of my hands, when I think I have caught you.

Socrates replied, smiling: Lately you compared me to the satyr-formed cases of statues; now probably you intend to honour me, by comparing me with the reptile that guides Æsculapius, and winds round his staff. I might be pleased with it, if the subject of discourse were merely the healing art, and the name of the animal did not at the same time remind one of the venomous fang.

Here you are again pronouncing your own sentence, interrupted Alcibiades; you are proud, Socrates. . . . .

Now, replied Socrates, so you would indeed have apprehended me.

Yes, said the pupil of the sage, you are proud. Therefore you talk of a divine spirit, who animates you, and reveals to you the truth. And in what mystery you envelope yourself and your discourse, when any one approaches you who is not agreeable to you. But,—and that is the mischief and incomprehensibility—you are also as modest as a child, and will not once attribute your wisdom to yourself. In short, you are unintelligible, and full of contradiction in yourself, you strange man!

No, surely, replied Socrates. Look at the sun! Is he not the brightest luminary? Yet he draws up

the vapours around him, and forms them into a frightful thunder-cloud, in which he hides his face. But the little dew-drop also, after he has reflected his image in it, and given to it the brilliancy of the diamond, he causes to ascend, and forms out of it the bow of heaven.

Then said Alcibiades: In future then must I compare you with the sun, or his fore-runner, Phœbus Apollo? At the first entertainment I will correct my mistake.

If I should concede this to you, my dear Alcibiades, replied Socrates, you would certainly be right when you call me proud, and would contradict yourself when you ascribe to me a childlike modesty.

Alcibiades answered: Then I must take the middle course, and compare you to Eos (Aurora).

How would you proceed in that? asked the other, and Alcibiades said: Peaceful and luminous, she announces the approach of the beaming sun-god as soon as he appears; she bows herself before him, as the superior. At the end of his glorious career, she again opens to him the gates of heaven: and when the damp night comes, she retires in the brightness of her beauty into her quiet tent.

Socrates smiled, and said: Here now, you have certainly found the way to gain the respect of the good, and the secret regard of the wicked. Pride, in the feeling of thy human dignity and destiny—modesty in view of the loftier One.

69. ADAM AND THE CHERUB OF PARADISE.

When Abel lay in his blood, and Adam stood by the slain and wept, the Cherub of Paradise approached the father of the human race, and stood in silence beside him, with serious brow. But Adam raised his eyes and said: Is that an image of the race that will spring from me? And will a brother's blood, shed by the hand of a brother, stain the earth?

The Cherub answered: It is even so!

Alas! by what name then will the frightful deed be called? asked Adam.

With a tear in his eye, the celestial being replied: War! Murder!

The father of the race shuddered, sighed, and said: Ah, why must the noble and the righteous fall by the hand of the wicked? The Cherub was silent. But Adam proceeded in his complaint, and said: What remains to me now in my grief, on the blood-stained earth?

The Cherub answered: To look towards heaven! and he vanished.

But Adam stood there until after the going-down of the sun. And when the stars were up, he stretched his arms towards Orion and the Bear, and exclaimed: O, ye bright sentinels at the gates of heaven, wherefore do ye walk your round so silently? If a mortal can hear the sound of your

voice, O, tell us of the land which lies beyond, and of Abel the beloved!

Then it was yet more silent all around; and Adam threw himself upon his face and prayed. And he heard in his soul a gentle voice, saying: Behold, Abel thy son liveth!

Then he went away comforted, with a quiet and sorrowful spirit.

70. THE PAINTER AND HIS MASTER.

A young painter had composed an excellent picture, decidedly the best he had executed. Even his master had no fault to find with it. The youthful limner, however, was so enraptured with it, that he was incessantly contemplating his work of art, and abandoned his study; for he believed that he could never surpass that.

One morning, when he thought again of feasting his soul on his picture, he found that his master had effaced the whole painting. Angry and weeping, he ran to him and inquired the reason of the barbarous procedure.

The master answered: I have done it with wise consideration. The picture was good as an evidence of your improvement, but it was at the same time your ruin. How so? asked the young artist. My dear friend, replied the master, you no more loved the art in your painting, but only yourself. Believe me, it was not perfect, although it seemed so to us;

it was only a study, (sketch of an artist.) Take the pencil, then, and see what you can do again. Regret not the sacrifice. The great must be in you, before you can make it appear on the canvass.

Encouraged and full of confidence in himself and his teacher, he seized the pencil and finished his most splendid effort—*The Sacrifice of Iphigenia;* for the painter's name was *Timanthes.*

71. THE SEVEN CHILDREN.

Early in the morning, about dawn, a pious father, and his wife, rose from their beds and thanked God for the return of another day, and for the refreshment of sleep.

The morning light shone into the chamber where seven children lay in their beds fast asleep.

And they looked upon their children, all in a row, and the mother said: There are seven of them in all! Oh, it will come hard upon us to provide for them! Thus sighed the mother; for there was a scarcity in the land.

The father, however, smiled, and said: Behold! are they not all seven lying there and slumbering? And they have rosy cheeks; and the morning light flows in upon them anew, so that they appear still more beautiful, even like seven blooming roses. Mother, that certainly shews us, that He who creates the dawn, and sends sleep, is faithful, and without change.

When they now left the bed-room, there stood

at the door fourteen shoes in a row, gradually less and less in size, two for each child. Then the mother wept as she looked and saw how many there were.

But the father said: Mother, why do you weep? Have they not all seven received plump and nimble little feet; why, then, should we be anxious about the covering? Have the children confidence in us; and why should not we trust in Him, who is more powerful than we apprehend?

Lo, his sun is rising! Let us, too, commence our daily course, like it, with joyful countenance!

So they talked together, and went to work; and God blessed their labours, so that they, and children too, had enough. For faith gives courage, and love begets strength.

72. REPENTANCE.

A countryman had, with his own hands, set out a row of superior fruit trees. When they bore their first fruit, he was delighted, and very desirous of seeing what manner of fruit it would be.

The son of his neighbour, a wicked boy, came into the garden, and enticed the countryman's son to go with him and rob the trees of all their fruit before it was quite ripe.

When the owner of the garden went out and saw the bare trees, he was much troubled, and exclaimed: O, why has this happened to me! Mischievous boys have stripped me of my delight!

These words went to the heart of the son, and he ran to his companion, and said: Oh, my father is sorry about what we have done; and I have no more peace in my mind. My father will not love me any more, but will punish me with neglect, as I have richly deserved. The other answered: You fool you! your father does not know it, and certainly will never find it out. You must carefully conceal it from him, and be on your guard.

But when Gotthold, for that was the boy's name, came home and saw the friendly countenance of his father, he could not look up to him in return, with a confiding aspect. For he thought, how can I look cheerfully on him whom I have troubled? I cannot even look upon myself. A dark shade rests upon my soul.

The father then gave to every one of his children of the fruits of autumn, and Gotthold of the same. The children jumped for joy, and eat them. But Gotthold hid his face, and wept bitterly. His father then went up to him, and said: My child, why do you cry? Gotthold replied: Oh, I am not worthy to be called your son. I cannot any longer bear to appear before you different from what I am and know myself to be. Dear father, do me no more kindness, but punish me, that I may again come into your presence, and cease to be my own tormentor. Let me suffer severely for my crime! for lo, *I* robbed the young trees.

His father reached him his hand, pressed him to

his heart, and said: I forgive you, my child! God grant that this may be the first and last time that you have concealed anything. Then I shall not be troubled about the trees.

73. SAUL AND JONATHAN.

One day, during the festival of New Moon, Saul, king of Israel, in familiar conversation with his son Jonathan, said: Tell me, my son, will you not forsake the son of Jesse, to whom your heart is so bound?

Jonathan replied: How could I desert myself and my own soul? So neither can I cease from the love of the son of Jesse.

Then the king asked farther: What do you find so glorious and great in the shepherd's boy of Bethlehem, that you set you heart upon him so? Is it his brownish face, or his skill in music, or the power with which he slew the Philistines? Behold! there are many in Israel with whom he is not to be compared in character and exploits.

Then answered Jonathan: Oh, let not my father be displeased. I do not regard his face, nor his skill, nor his exploits; and I know not why and wherefore; but this I know, that I love him as my own soul.

But the king was angry, and said: Do you not know, then, that he will rend the kingdom from you, and himself become king over Israel?

Jonathan, with serene countenance, said to the king, his father: O, my father, let him! Is it not all one which of us two rules in Israel? For, behold, we have made a covenant in the Lord; and agreeably to this, I shall be next to him and always about him.

On hearing this, the king was very much enraged, and seized his spear to pierce him through; for he knew not what love is, and had no friend at his Court.

Jonathan, however, turned and went out, and neither eat nor drank in the festival of New Moon. For he was concerned about David, that his father so condemned him.

74. THE DEATH OF EGLON.

In the city of Gaza, on the sea-side, there dwelt a man, named Eglon, who had been judge among his people a long time, and had large possessions. But the people admired his justice and mildness more than his wealth, and the poor familiarly called him father Eglon.

When the day of his death drew near, he summoned his friends and brethren, with his children, to his presence, and said to them: Behold, I am now about to die. The angel of death appeared to me this night, and I felt the gentle fanning of his wing. Rejoice therefore with me and be glad!

They, who stood around him, thought this strange, and looked at each other, and said: Would that

Eglon's words, to-day, for the first time, might not be found true.

He, however, smiled, saying: Far from you be this mourning, and this vain hope! My days are numbered! This is now the third time I have had a near view of the angel of death, so that his face is not strange to me. But to-day, for the first time, he appears to me with friendly aspect. Therefore I follow him gladly and with joy. Then his friends looked on him with silent amazement.

He, however, observed that they did not understand him, and therefore said: I will relate to you the principal events of my life, then you will comprehend me.

My youth flowed on cloudless and serene, and I knew not the sober aspect of life. When I became a man, I was appointed a judge in Gaza, and my decisions in the gates were received with confidence. Besides, I enjoyed the affection of a wife, whom the voices of the people commended as the most beautiful, and the noblest of the daughters of the land, while I was called the happiest man on earth. Then God visited me with severe sickness, which confined me to my bed for a month, and resisted all the efforts of the best skill; for the physicians gave me up, and said: He will die. Then first the angel of death appeared to me in frightful form, and I implored him to depart and let me live.

He did depart, I recovered, and life was to me more joyous than before. For my wife became the

mother of two children, beautiful as two blooming pomegranates; and every day of their growth was to me like a day of spring. Then said all in the land: Eglon is the happiest man among us! What more could be wanting to his happiness, and to his house, either internal or external?

Lo, there came the plague of Egypt over the sea, and both the children died, a boy and a girl. And the mother took sick also, and she said: The children are gone! O, Eglon, they will be safe for us, and restored to us in another world! So saying, she also died. And I stood alone upon my carpet, and my house seemed too wide and too narrow for me.

I now declaimed in a passionate manner against the angel of death, and called him the destroyer, and when he floated in the air before me, I said: In the depths of the ocean will I seek for the cruel wretch, that he may give me my place with the lost! What are life and the world to me!

So I went out, by night, to the sea-shore. But on my way thither, I heard sighing and lamentation in a hut, and I went in, for I expected here to find a companion in sorrow.

There lay a woman on the ground, tearing her hair, and five children weeping around her, begging for bread, and a grey-headed man stood by, bowed down and trembling with age. I was affrighted, and asked: Woman, what is the matter?

The old man replied: By the late storm at sea, her husband, my son, with his little vessel, has been

overwhelmed in the deep. The rich man, who had loaned him the money for it, now demands it back, and as we had it not to give him, he has taken every thing he could find, and to-morrow he will drive us out of the house, unless we die of hunger before the morrow comes. Then said I: Why do you not appeal to Eglon, the judge of Gaza? Then the mother opened her mouth, and said: Eglon dwells in a palace, and is the most prosperous man in the land! Besides, added the old man, the debt is a just one, and Eglon has so decided.

Then I exclaimed: God of heaven! Eglon, is that thy justice! and I tarried with them in the fisherman's hut, and comforted them, and the next morning, I said: Behold Eglon, the judge of Gaza! Come now to my house, that I may exercise justice!

Ever since that time, my dear friends, I have known myself and the poor, and have practised righteousness.

Thus have I enjoyed myself, suffered and toiled on earth. In prosperity, death seemed to me like a destroying angel, in the indignation I felt at my sufferings, like an officer, who puts the cup of poison into the hands of the prisoner; now, however, I see in him, what he is, the friend who leads me to my love!

Thus spake the aged Eglon, and then reclined again on his pillow and gave up the ghost.

75. THE LITTLE TREE.

A father about to cross the sea on a voyage to a distant land, before his departure, called all his children around him. He bore a small tree in his hand, and they unitedly planted it. Then said the father: When you see this tree, think of your father, far away. Before it blooms three times, I hope to be again with you, God willing!

So saying, he set off, and the little tree bloomed beautifully and delightfully the first year.

But as the father was on his passage over the sea, a tremendous storm arose, which wrecked the ship on the rocks, and the father was buried in the waves.

The children wept and mourned many long months, and above all, when the tree budded and bloomed, did they stand around it and weep.

A prudent man, a friend of the deceased, then came to the children and said: Lo, the tree has lost its interesting import, and has become to you a source of pain; therefore let me take it up and plant it elsewhere, that the sight of it may no more trouble you!

But the children answered with one consent. Oh no, leave us the tree! Although joy no more blooms upon it for us, but tears and sorrow, yet are they the tears of love and the sorrows of filial affection devoted to a dear father. Oh no, do not take away the tree from us!

76. THE GRACES OF SOCRATES.

One day Socrates walked, with some of his disciples, into the garden of Pericles, and they spoke of the arts and their divine excellence.

Alcibiades, with a frivolous smile, said: Tell us, Socrates, how you came to cultivate the Graces, and why you gave up the arts, after you had finished your master-piece? Would that you had first given us the goddess of wisdom!

Socrates replied: I will give you the history of my art, and you shall then decide, Alcibiades, whether it is advisable that I once again take up the chisel.

When young, I loved the arts with all my heart, and visited the workshops of the masters, and the temples of the gods; for in the former I expected to find human principles, in the latter to receive divine inspiration.

With this view, I once entered a small ancient temple on the boundaries of Attica, which was dedicated to the Graces. The simplicity of its form attracted me, and I said to myself: Although you find nothing here for your art—for how should a marble image stray hither?—yet here can you nourish and foster in yourself the love of the simple. For this, I thought, ought not to be wanting to the artist. So I went in.

At the gate of the little temple, there met we an old man of dignified, friendly appearance. What are

you seeking here, my son, he asked, with a gentle voice and blessed countenance. I told him that I was a disciple of the arts, and came to the temple to improve myself.

It is well, my son, he replied, that you begin with yourself, and draw near to the divine in order to beget it in yourself before you venture to represent it to others. Your zeal shall not be unrewarded. I shall shew you what you would seek in vain throughout all Greece—the oldest and first images of the Graces.

Thereupon he showed me three four-cornered roughly-hewn stones, and said: These are they.* I looked at him with silent amazement. He, however said, with a smile: Do you think it strange, that the divinity was in the soul of man before his mouth or hand was able to express it? Come, do you honour it, by representing it more worthily! My duty now calls me: I am the priest of the temple. He departed, and left me in a strange mood.

But I went back to Athens and chiseled out the Graces. You know them. I took them to the priest and presented them for the temple. With trembling hand I offered them to him.

Well, my son! said the old man, you have completed your work by industry and love! But, he

* "At first the Greeks were content to symbolize the gods by means of rough block, or four-cornered stone. Even Love and the Graces, according to Pausanias, were represented by mere stones."—Winklemann's Hist. of An. Art.

proceeded, with earnestness, tell me, have you also satisfied yourself?

Oh, no! replied I, with grief; I have a higher conception in my soul, and feel that it cannot be reached by the hand.

Then the old man laid his hands upon my shoulder, and with inexpressible grace, said: Come, then, place your statues in the saloons of the rich at Athens, and leave us our stones. Behold! my son, we, in our simplicity, have faith; therefore, that simple symbol is sufficient for us. They have only knowledge; therefore they need the artificial image. I counsel thee, however, to know the divine germ which is in thee, and in every human soul, and to foster it; so will you beget the divine within you and without! So saying, he left me.

I, however, went back with my images, and, depressed in spirit, thought of the words of the old man, who seemed to me like a divine being. So I stood again a whole night, the starry host above me, and the veiled earth beneath my feet; and when the sun arose, it was also light and bright within me. I became acquainted with the eternal Charis, Love, in me and out of me; I prayed—hastened home—laid my chisel at the feet of my statues of the Graces—went out and sought, and then found you, my loved ones.

Are not you the most glorious expression of the divine Charis; and shall I not live longer in such images, than in the cold perishable marble?

Thus spake Socrates, and looked round on the circle of his beloved disciples with a more lustrous eye. They drew closer about him. The profound and delicate souled Plato took the right of his teacher, and gazed silently on his face. The good-souled Apollodorus was on his left, weeping. Alcibiades stood looking on the ground, with glowing cheeks. The sun was just going down, and they went quietly home.

77. THE TEMPLE AT MEMPHIS.

When Pythagoras, the sage of Samos, visited Egypt, for the purpose of acquiring wisdom from the sacred sources of antiquity, the priests conducted him into the temple at Memphis. In silent grandeur, like a lofty mountain, rose the wonderful structure, in the twilight of the morning.

How have human hands ever raised these immense masses of stones? exclaimed the Greek, full of astonishment. Combined power, replied the priest, is equal to any thing, when guided by one spirit.

Now the strong and huge doors of the temple unfolded like the gates of the kingdom of darkness. They walked in and stood in silence between the lofty pillars; and a wind rushed through the immense halls, like the voices of spirits.

Then the youthful philosopher of Samos shuddered, so that a trembling came over him, and he leaned against the wall, and wept. A priest ap-

proached him, and asked: Why do you weep? Pythagoras, after a short pause, replied: Oh, leave me alone! Do I not here feel myself in the fearful presence of that Being, whose name I cannot utter!

Then said the priest: Blessed art thou, my son, in thy humility! It leads thee to the divinity, to whose praise this sanctuary was erected. May the sublime form of the edifice lead thee back again reconciled to humanity.

Consider that this temple existed in the mind of a man before it rose out of the rock. Dry up your tears, and go out with joy.

78. ZACCHEUS.

In Jericho, in the land of Judea, lived Zaccheus, the chief of the publicans, for many years after he had seen the Lord from the mulberry-tree. He was of small stature; but he walked in simplicity and uprightness and piety before God and men, distributing of his goods to the poor, nor ever defrauding any one.

Every morning, at sunrise, he arose from his bed, and went secretly out into the fields, in the vicinity of Jericho, and returned with quiet, softened spirit, to enter on the duties of the day.

His wife and friends observing it, said to one another: Whither does he stroll every morning? Come, let us secretly follow him, that we may see

what he is about; for it is well worth the while to look after the quiet ways of a pious man.

So they agreed, and rose early, his wife and his friends, and went out privately, following him at some distance. They observed that he went to the mulberry-tree, where he had seen the Lord; and they concealed themselves in a wood. It was a hot day in the time of harvest.

As they stood looking on, they saw Zaccheus take a little mug and fill it with water, and moisten the root of the tree, and remove the weeds—nursing the tree with great care. After doing all this, Zaccheus looked kindly upon the tree, and then turned to go towards Jericho.

His friends came out of the wood, and smiling, said: Behold, Zaccheus, we have been studying your secret ways; for we could not ascertain why you went out so early every morning. Why do you not send one of your servants to tend the tree, which you seem to love so dearly.

Zaccheus replied: You have done wrong in spying out my feelings, which you cannot share; for feeling is born in stillness, and loves stillness. But, my dears, allow me the grateful nursing of the tree; for it was doubtless it that led me to *Him*, and to my peace.

79. THE BARREN TREE.

A countryman had a brother in the city, who

was a gardener, and owned an excellent orchard, full of the choicest trees, so that his skill and his superior trees were everywhere celebrated. On a certain occasion, the countryman visited his brother in the city, and admired the trees, which stood beautifully in rows, and grew up smooth and straight as wax candles.

Then said the gardener to him: Behold, my brother, I will give you the best tree in my nursery, that you and your children and grand-children may rejoice in it! Thereupon he called his servants, and pointed out the tree which he wished them to dig up. The countryman was very glad, and had it sent out to his farm.

The next morning he was in great doubt as to where he should plant the tree. For he thought: If I plant it there on the hill, the wind may blow upon it and shake off the precious fruit, before it is ripe; if I plant it here, near the road, travellers will see it, and the smiling apples will entice them to rob me; if I set it out too near the door of my house, it will not be safe from my own children and domestics.

So, on reflection, he planted the tree behind the barn, on the north side, and said within himself: Here greedy rapacity will scarcely expect it! and secretly rejoiced in his prudence. But lo! the tree bore no fruit the first year, nor the second year. He then sent for his brother to come out, and found fault with him, saying: You have deceived me, and

given me a miserable, barren snag, instead of a fruitful tree! For behold, it is now the third year, and yet it produces nothing but leaves.

When the gardener saw the tree, he laughed, and replied: It is no wonder! You have set the tree here, where it is exposed to the cold wind, but enjoys neither light nor heat. How can it then bring forth blossoms and fruit! Its nature is noble and generous. But you have planted it with selfish and distrustful feelings. How then can you expect to reap the noble and the joyous?

80. CAIN'S COMPLAINT.

Whilst Cain dwelt in the land of Nod, beyond Eden, towards the East, he sat one day under a terebinth, supporting his head upon his hands and sighing. His wife had gone out to look for him, and carried her infant Hanna on her arms. After she had found him, she stood a long time near him, under the terebinth, and heard the sighing of Cain.

And at length she said to him: Cain, wherefore dost thou sigh? Is there no end to thy misery? Affrighted, he raised his head, and said: Oh, is it you, Zilla? Behold, my sin is greater than can be forgiven! When he had thus said, he bowed his head again, and covered his eyes with his hand.

His wife, however, addressed him in soft tones: Oh, Cain, the Lord is merciful, and of great goodness. When Cain heard these words, he was terri-

fied again, and said: Alas! shall thy tongue too become a thorn to pierce through my heart! She replied: That be far from me! But hearken, Cain, and look around thee. Are not our crops flourishing, and have we not already gathered two abundant harvests? Is not the Lord gracious, even to us, and does he not deal with us mildly?

Cain answered: To thee, Zilla, to thee! and to thy Hanna! not to me! I perceive only in his goodness how far I was from him, when I—slew Abel.

But Zilla interrupted him, and said: Dost thou not then, Cain, till the earth, and scatter the seed in the furrow? and for thee the morning shines as in Eden, and the dew glistens on the flowers and the herbs.

Ah, Zilla, my poor wife, replied Cain, I see in the redness of morning only the bloody head of Abel, and the dew on each blade of grass is to me a tear, and on every flower a bloody drop. And when the sun rises, I see behind me in my own shadow, the murdered Abel, and before me, him that slew him. Has not the purling of the brook a voice, which laments about Abel, and, in the breath of the cool wind, does not his breath sweep over me? Ah, more terrible to me than the voice of wrath which speaks in the thunder, and cries to me, where is thy brother Abel, is the gentle voice, which flows every where around me. And when night comes—oh, it envelopes me like a gloomy sepulchre, and around me is a realm of the dead, which encloses me alone!

Midday alone is my hour, when the sun scorches the top of my head, the sweat runs in the furrows of my cheeks, and no shadow follows me!

Then said Zilla: O, Cain, my beloved! See, there come our lambs! white as the lilies of the field, and with udders full of milk; they skip frolicsomely to the fold in the twilight of evening.

Cain beheld, with stern aspect, and exclaimed: Alas, that is Abel's flock! Are they not red with Abel's blood? Their bleating is mourning over Abel! Is it not the voice of lamentation?—What then could belong to Cain?

Then wept Zilla, and said: Am not I then Zilla, thy wife, that loves thee? But he replied: How canst thou love Cain, who loves not himself? What hast thou of me, but tears and sighs—How couldst thou love Cain, who murdered Abel?

Then she reached over to him Hanna, their little child, and the infant smiled on its father.

Then Cain threw himself upon his face under the terebinth tree, sobbed, and cried out: Oh, must I yet look on the smile of innocence! It is not the smile of the son of Cain—It is Abel's smile! It is the smile of Abel, whom Cain slew!

Thus he sighed and cried, and then lay mute with his face upon the earth. And Zilla leaned on the terebinth, for she was tremblingly weak, and her tears flowed down upon the ground.

81. THE ROSE AND THE LILY.

Malvina stood with her father before a lily which bloomed under a rose-bush. Dazzling white, as a beam of light, the beautiful flower lifted up its opened fragrant cup. Above it hung a full-blown, vigorous rose, and cast a reddish glow over the silvery leaves of the lily, and the fragrance of the two flowers was commingled.

Oh, what a beautiful union! exclaimed Malvina, and bowed down her head, smiling, to the flower.

It is the bond of innocence and love! replied the father. Thus they stood in silence before the flowers.

Meantime Oscar, Malvina's modest lover, came into the garden: and a ruddy glow diffused itself over Malvina's cheeks, like the hue of the rose upon the lily.

The father saw it, and said: Is it not true, Malvina, that the flowers have a language and expression?

For innocence and love! added Oscar.

82. THE FIELD OF GRAIN.

Into the quiet dwelling of a pious husbandman, there had entered a violent plague, which had thrown himself, together with his wife and four children, upon the bed of sickness. Two children

fell victims to the cruel plague, his eldest son and a girl, the prop of her mother. Thus was the labour of the field put back, and the last penny of their earnings spent.

But at length the husbandman recovered, and concluded, for the first time, to walk out into his field, which he had not seen for so many days.

When about to go, with his wife, behold a storm arose, with wind, lightning, and rolling thunder, and a heavy rain, so that they waited until the shower had passed away.

When the thunder and the rain were over, the husbandman said: Well, now let us go; the fragrance of the field will be all the more delightful after the long drought.

As they now walked forth to the field, which was already laden with ears, the odour of it came over them fresh and pleasant, and above hung the broken clouds bright with light, while the sunbeams, in long brilliant lines, shot down from behind them. The young ears and stalks hung their heads, borne down with the pearly drops; and the grass was clothed with fresh beauty.

Then the husbandman took his wife by the hand and looked towards heaven into the bright clouds, and the stream of light, and said: Oh, Lord, upon us, too, hast thou sent a storm! Oh, let us be also like this field! We went and wept. Oh, let us, also bear precious seed, that we bring home our sheaves with joy! Thus prayed the husbandman; and his

wife wept, and said: Amen! Yea, so let it be! And they both returned to their home comforted.

83. NATHAN AND SOLOMON.

Solomon, in his childhood, read in the book of Moses, the history of the creation of man. He then went to Nathan, his teacher, and asked: How can the body of a man be made out of the ground? Nathan replied: How can a tree grow up out of the earth, with leaves, flowers, and fruit? And knowest thou not that thy body will return again to the dust of the earth, whence it came?

But why, inquired the royal youth, do the Holy Scriptures relate to us the formation of man so circumstantially?

In order that man, answered Nathan, may not exalt himself and lord it over every thing around him; for the earth keeps him down. In its bosom grows the bread which nourishes him; and the crown, too, that adorns the king's head belongs to the dust. The law of the earth is a perpetual revolution; therefore it takes back the body and the crown. Oh, then, forget not that thou art dust, Jedidja, and learn humility.

But, said Solomon, he breathed into his nostrils also the breath of life.

Behold, proceeded the prophet, the breath of God, which streams through his breast, reminds him at every respiration that he needs constant supply from

without himself; for on that hang his being and his life. Oh, Jedidja, forget not in whose breath you live and move, and cherish the childlike spirit.

Then Solomon inquired again: What, then, was given to man above the beasts of the field?

That he knows, replied the man of God, on whose earth, and in whose breath he moves. But, lo! to man was also given a face to look down upon the perishable dust which is underneath him, and to look up to the everlasting abodes of light. So he stands with erect head in humility and in childlike faith, and feels himself a son and image of the Most High.

Oh, Jedidja! may the crown never bow thee down to the dust, but rest on thy head like a crown of light!

84. THE MIRACLE.

One day in spring, Solomon, in his youth, was sitting under the palm trees, in the garden of his father, the king, looking down, in deep thought, to the earth. Just then, his teacher, Nathan, stepped up to him, and inquired: Of what are you thinking so earnestly under the palms?

The youth raised his head, and said: Nathan, I wish very much to see a miracle!

The prophet smiled, and replied: A wish which I also had in my youthful years.

And was your wish granted? eagerly asked the royal youth.

A man of God, said Nathan, came to me with a kernel of a pomegranate in his hand. See, said he, what will come out of this kernel! He thereupon made a hole in the ground with his finger, and laid in the kernel, and covered it up. When he withdrew his hand, the clods separated, and I beheld two little leaves come forth. But scarcely had I looked upon them, when the leaves closed on one another and became a round stem, enveloped in a bark; and the stem grew visibly higher and thicker.

Then the man of God said unto me: Give attention! And as I observed, seven branches shot out of the stem, like unto the seven branches on the candlestick of the altar.

I was amazed; but the man of God nodded, and bid me be silent and mark what occurred. So, said he, new creations will soon begin!

Thereupon he took up water in the hollow of his hand out of the brook which flowed by, and sprinkled the branches thrice; when, behold, the branches all at once hung full of green leaves, so that a cool shade surrounded us, mingled with a delightful fragrance. Whence, I exclaimed, this sweet odour to the refreshing shade?

Seest thou not, said the man of God, the purple blossoms, how they shoot out of the green leaves and hang down in clusters?

I was about to speak, but a gentle breeze fanned the

leaves and strewed the blossoms around us, as when the snow floats down out of the clouds. Scarcely had the blossoms fallen, when among the leaves hung down the red pomegranates, like the almonds on the rod of Aaron. Then the man of God left me in deep amazement.

Here Nathan stopped. And Solomon hastily inquired: Where is he? What is the name of this godly man? Is he yet alive?

Then answered Nathan: Son of David, I have told thee a dream. Solomon, on hearing this, was vexed in spirit, and said: How couldst thou so deceive me?

Nathan rejoined: I have not deceived thee, son of Jesse! For, lo! in thy father's garden thou mayest see it all in reality, just as I have told thee. Does not precisely the same happen with every pomegranate, and with other trees also? Yes! said Solomon, but imperceptibly, and in a long period!

Then, replied Nathan, is it, therefore, less a divine work because it takes place unobserved, and in quiet stillness? I should think it would be so much the more divine.

Study nature first, said he, and her operations, then wilt thou easily believe in a higher power, and not sigh after miracles performed through human instrumentality.

85. THE PROPHET AND THE KING.

When Solomon, king of Israel, wandered after other gods, and his heart was no more with the Lord, as formerly, the prophet Ahia, of Shiloh, came unto him, and said: I have a word of truth to thee, in the name of the Lord.

Solomon answered: Speak, I will gladly hear it from thy lips.

Then said the seer of Shiloh: Thou deceivest thyself, O king: the truth is, to him who loves it not, bitterer than gall, and sharper than a two-edged sword; and kings seldom love it. But that thou mayest be profited, receive its teaching. Jehovah gave thee the precious gift of wisdom. Thou hast, however, exchanged it for folly and madness. Are not sacrifices offered on Sion's hill to Moloch?—

The king interrupted the prophet: Shall I then make myself a judge of the faith of men? Am not I a mortal as well as they? If Jehovah tolerates it, so will I also tolerate it.

The prophet was angry, and said: The idols, in whose bloody arms innocence wails—that thou callest tolerance!—I see, thy wisdom speaks the language of sense, and thy pride cloaks itself in the garb of humility. Truth is too noble to waste its words on hypocrisy. So saying, the prophet left, and Solomon was glad that he was gone. But the words of the man of God were a thorn in his heart.

Then he put on his royal apparel, and appointed a magnificent festival, and spent seven days and nights in great pomp and pleasure.

But when all was still and quiet around him, the words of the holy man constantly flitted before the king's mind, and often in his dreams did he hear the sound of his voice, and see his angry countenance. Then he thought in his soul: I will have rest from these visions, and will hear friendly words out of the mouth of the prophet; and he forbid the sacrificing of children to Moloch.

Then he sent to the prophet, and said to him: Speak, Ahia! And the man of Shiloh looked earnestly on the king, and said: Dost thou think to hear pleasant words from me? Solomon replied: Have I not forbidden the offerings to Moloch?

Then opened the prophet his mouth, and spake: Child of man, thinkest thou through thy prudence to appease the Holy One; and by omission of the worst, to restore peace to thy soul? King, thou mockest thyself, and the truth is not in thee. Although thou didst destroy the high places of Moloch and Chemoth, and Ashtaroth, and put far from thee all that appertains to the idols, yet thou standest in the broad road of folly, and art not yet returned to the path that leads to wisdom. Behold, thou hast converted all Jehovah's blessings into curses to thyself, and his favours into means of destruction. He gave to thee the treasures of the earth, and thou offerest them to thy lusts. Thy

fame sounds unto the ends of the earth, but in thy heart dwells disgrace. The people hearken unto thee, and princes bow themselves before thee, but peace has departed from thy spirit, and discord rages in thy bones.

Then came the Spirit of the Lord upon the prophet Ahia of Shiloh, and he took his mantle and rent it, and said: Behold, the Lord will send thee afflictions, and make thy crown a burden to thy head. Thy posterity will become corrupted and rent asunder as this mantle. Sion's palaces will be like a cottage in a vineyard, and as a night-lodge in a garden of melons. Come then, change thy course, and walk uprightly before the Lord!

When the king heard these words, the fierceness of his anger burned in his bosom, and he said: Insolent wretch, I shall dismiss thee from my land, and order thy banishment from the bounds of Israel!

The prophet replied: I go, as thou hast commanded me. But thou wilt not banish the truth with me, Solomon! The word of the Highest needeth not human lips.

Ahia, however, withdrew beyond the limits of the land of Judea, and wandered in the wilderness. Then came the angel of Jehovah unto him, and said: Ahia, thou hast spoken as becomes the man of God. Ahia answered: But of what use is it to him! He will not give up his ways, nor leave off to corrupt Israel. Let not that trouble thee, replied the angel.

Thy duty is to sow the seed, and then to wait patiently for the blossoms.

Why, asked the prophet, did not the Lord grant to the distinguished king, with wisdom, also the blossom of wisdom, truth?

The angel answered: Ask rather; why did not the Lord give to the bee, besides the skill, wherewith it builds its habitation, and gathers its honey, understanding also to apply the rule to its cells, and to weigh out the honey? So would the bee be a man—and Solomon, according to thy will, an animal.

I am angry with the king, said the prophet.

How canst thou be angry with the erring man? said the celestial messenger. The rejected truth torments him. He, who has once known it, will not entirely and forever slight it. The fog will vanish—then the word of the Lord will strike him as a flash of lightning:—the Lord has sent adversity upon him; he has made ready the furrows. Come now, go forth and cultivate the field of the Lord! So saying, the angel left the prophet of Shiloh.

And when Ahia came to Sion, messengers brought information to the king's ears: Behold, Hadad, the Edomite, lifts up himself against thee, and much people cling unto him; and Resin rises against thee with footmen and horsemen; and thy servant, Jeroboam, also is thine adversary, and lifts his hand against thee; and the land is full of complaints against thy son, Rehoboam, who ceases not

to do wickedness, and cries to the people: What part have we in David, or what inheritance in the son of Jesse?

When the king heard these words, he was much troubled in spirit, and thought with himself, I will appease the Lord; and he appointed a great sacrifice, as an atonement to the Lord. He sent to Ahia first, however, praying him to be present at the sacrifice, and to entreat the Lord for him. And as the flame of the burnt offering ascended to heaven, Solomon said to the man of God: Intercede for me with the Lord, that he would look graciously upon me, and avert the evil from me.

Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Ahia, and he opened his mouth and said: Hast thou therefore bid me come unto thee, that I should be the minister of thy sins and thy deceit? Now that adversity assails thy spirit, thou wilt bribe Jehovah with the fat of bullocks, and make me thy minister! Child of mortality, the deceit to which thou hast done homage, has thrown its snares around thy heart. Thou fanciest that He, who fills heaven and earth, is a blood-thirsty idol, like Moloch, and a slave to his lusts, like Solomon! Let me return to the desert!

Thus spake the prophet, and departed. The king, however, stood contrite, and went into his chamber and put on mourning, and wept all day and all night. The angel of the Lord then appeared to the prophet and said: Get thee up to Solomon! the truth

has broken his heart as a plough breaks up the earth, and his eyes run over with tears, like the dew falling from heaven. Come, scatter the seed in the furrows!——Just then came messengers from the king, and Ahia accompanied them. When Solomon saw him, he said: Oh, Ahia, my spirit is troubled, even unto death. For thy mouth has uttered the truth. But the truth burns on my soul, like a live coal, and in the land there is kindled a fire which will consume Israel, and my only son is among the destroyers.

Then said the prophet: Thinkest thou, O king, that I can annihilate the memory of thy sins? Can an arrow return again to the string which has sent it?

Solomon sighed, and said: Oh, expiate my guilt with God, who speaks in me, and restore peace to my soul! The prophet replied: That is thy work! But come, anoint thy head, and sacrifice to the Lord!

Then Solomon anointed his head, and put on his festive robes, and they went out upon Sion to sacrifice to the Lord.

As the flame now moved up towards heaven, and consumed the sacrifice, the seer of Shiloh approached the king, and said: Lo, the word of the Lord speaks to thee out of the flame. Thou hast perceived the truth, and its fiery glow burns upon thy soul. Well, let it grow up into a flame of the Lord,

and consuming the earthly, mount up towards heaven!

Thus spake the prophet of Shiloh. Then began the music of the harps and of the songs of the temple: Holy, holy, holy is the Lord, who is, and who was, and who is to be! The whole earth is full of his glory! And the holy song resounded through the halls of the sanctuary.

And Solomon lay on his face and wept and prayed.

86. CEPHAS.

One morning, ere the day began to dawn, and men were still buried in sumbers, Cephas, the apostle of the Lord, passed through a village of Galilee, in company with his beloved disciple, John Mark. The inhabitants of the village were still lying in deep sleep, and neither footstep nor voice of mortal was to be heard. Then a cock announced the soft breaking of the morning twilight.

Cephas opened his lips, and said: Hearest thou, Mark, the cry of my herald? Mark replied, and inquired with modest reverence: Why callest thou him thine? Does he not proclaim to us all the approaching day?

True! answered the rock-man; but dost thou not remember that night on which he called to me with loud voice, when they led the Lord to be crucified?

I never hear his crowing, without thinking of that day and that hour.

Oh, my friend and teacher! exclaimed Mark, with mournful fervour, and was speechless.

Then asked Cephas: Wherefore dost thou sigh, Mark? Behold, thou art in company not with Simon, the coward, who would not confess Him, but with Cephas, the rock-man. Formerly the darkness of night encompassed me about; but the night has gone by, and the day has appeared. The cry of the herald proclaims to us the sun of truth, in whose beams we walk, and the victorious conflict to which we haste. Behold, I stood and wept—then was there night and twilight; but now we walk as in the day—strong and joyful.

Thus it becomes the discreet messenger of God, who proclaims heavenly truth, answered Mark; and they went on their way joyfully.

87. THAMYRIS.

A youth, endued with a poetical genius and superior parts, joined the disciples of the divine Plato. His songs were praised by all who knew him; and Greece was promising herself, in him, another Sophocles and Pindar.

But the praise of the populace stunned him and puffed him up, so that he spake contemptuously of Hesiod and Æschylus, and other masters of song.

This grieved the divine sage; and he wished to

cure the soul of the vain youth. I would, said he, do as much for my fatherland, as if I added to it a province; for the holy art of poetry was given to man to elevate him above earth. But it is not the property of a sickly soul.

One evening of spring, the young poet went to Plato, whilst walking alone in the garden of the Academy, and thus addressed the philosopher: I have now nearly completed my poem which shall enrapture Greece, and place on my brow the eternal laurel!

I congratulate thee, replied Plato, if you succeed.

And why should it not? hastily rejoined the youth.

Plato then observed: The gift of poetry, my dear, comes from the gods, who also give prosperity. But you seem to think, not of them, but of yourself.

The Youth. I feel the divinity within.

Plato. Rather, you feel yourself in the divinity.

Youth. Are not both, then, the same.

Plato. By no means. Now you speak only of yourself, and think and believe only in yourself and your own powers. In the other case, you would be silent about yourself and song. Celebrity with men, and the praise of the people is your first aim. The holy, my dear, should be preferred before the earthly.

Youth. I do not understand you, Plato.

Plato. I will speak to you in the words of the father of poets and prophets. Although you will

not, as I learn, allow him to be unsurpassable, yet is he the elder, and it is the duty of the younger to hearken to the elder.

Youth. Well, let it be so! although he will never be to me the model of the highest excellence.

Plato. Yet he teaches us much wisdom in his ancient sayings, which you will not despise. Come, hear one of them.

Plato then led the youth to a fragrant bower, where they seated themselves, and the sage proceeded:

Thamyris, the lovely singer of Thrace, came to king Eurytas, of Œchalia, who nobly rewarded him for his poetry, and honoured him as a favourite of the muses. But the royal praise and glittering reward corrupted the excellent singer; for, mistaking his powers, he boasted publicly of bearing off the palm in song, even pitting himself against the muses.

The muses, who, at that time, still walked among mortals, met him on his way, and punished his presumption. They inflicted on him blindness; and, alas! they also deprived him of the sweet gift of song, and of the art of the sounding harp.

How could the gods, inquired the youth, contradicting themselves, destroy the divine which they had bestowed on the poet?

Not they, answered Plato; he himself destroyed it. With his arrogance began his blindness and his punishment.

But hear, proceeded the sage, what more the ancient story adds. The muses destroyed not the divine; they transferred the soul of Thamyris into a nightingale.

Do you hear it then in the plane-tree? Knowest thou the favourite of the muses? Its form is the simplest and most unadorned; it conceals itself in the dark bushes, and sings its most lovely melodious songs in the stillness of night. It knows not that it carries the soul of a Thamyris in its tender bosom.

Plato ceased and listened to the nightingale's song. The youth arose and left the godlike sage with embittered spirit; and, contemning the teachings of nature and wisdom, he never returned to the garden of the Academy.

But neither is the name of the youth known among the Grecian poets.

88. THE WILD BEAST FIGHT.

The queen of a powerful sovereign of the east came to him one day, in tears of wrath, and entreating vengeance on an offender of his imperial majesty: See, said she, the villain brought me as an ornament a precious stone; but the stone was found to be a counterfeit. Already he suffers for his deceit in prison; but with his life must he compensate the misdeed—I swear it by my own! I require, O king, that you condemn him to a lion-fight.

Oh, let us not judge in passion, replied the monarch; for how could right flow from wrath? It becomes a leader of the people to be free from all passion. Is he not the image and representative of the Most High?

Does not, then, even God show his anger in storm? asked the queen.

Not exactly, replied the king; he is benevolent even in storm. Oh, my love, man forms his idea of the Eternal too much after his own image, and thinks him such a one as himself.

The queen, however, raged the more, and said: God, too, hates and punishes the transgressor, and has not given the sword to princes in vain. I only wish that the offender receive his deserts. His death is announced to him. There is no alteration!

Well, then, said the king, be it so! On the morrow!

When, on the next day, the hour arrived, and the drums and timbrels proclaimed the bloody spectacle, the queen went forth with a pompous retinue, and consoled herself with the triumph of her wrath; for revenge is like a refreshing cordial to the angry spirit.

The herald opened the lists—the criminal stood trembling—and the drums and timbrels resounded again.

But, behold, there came out, instead of the lion, a white, gentle lamb, that went up confidingly to the quaking man. Then the drums and timbrels

were silent; and there began a sweet symphony of harps and flutes; and the lamb laid itself down at the feet of the trembling offender, and looked up in his face.

Then the queen looked at her spouse and blushed. The king, however, said: Thy countenance, my love, testifies to me that I have exercised the right of retaliation. He who deceived thee has been deceived; and on thee will be bestowed, instead of the ignoble, the noble! The blush on thy cheeks, which to me is more beautiful far than the royal purple which adorns thee, also recompenses me; for thy face proves to me that I have acted like the image and representative of the Highest!

Thereupon the drums and timbrels announced the conclusion of the game; and the people shouted: Hail! to our king and queen!

88. THE CEDARS OF LEBANON.

Hiram, king of Tyre, and Solomon, king of Israel, once went out together to the cedar forest on Lebanon. Arm in arm the two kings walked under the fragrant shade of the lofty forest, and Hiram enjoyed exceedingly the wise discourse of the king of Israel.

At their feet lay the wide extended country, blooming in peace. For Solomon and Hiram had made an alliance and were friends; so also were their respective people. The two kings stood still,

and looked abroad into the distance. Then the heart of Hiram, the king of Tyre, overflowed, and he said to Solomon: Oh, how happy for us, that we are friends! And do we not stand like the cedars upon our mountains, and our people around us?

Solomon answered and said: Well are the cedars called the royal tree. It is the highest of all, and its form is full of majesty. It grows upon the summit of the mountains, drinks from the clouds, having no need of the brook that moistens its foot. Its roots take hold on the rocks, and it tosses its head in the blue of heaven. For centuries has the storm raged around these summits, and the thunder rolled along the brow of the venerable forest. But the cedar stands unshattered, independent as a god, and having no need of the humble valley. Therefore is it also called the tree of God, which the Lord hath planted, and is made an image of the saints of the Most High.

One thing it lacks, said Hiram, the fragrant flower, and nourishing, refreshing fruit.

Solomon smiled and replied: Are you in jest, Hiram, or do you speak as the sovereign of the merchandising people? Is not the whole cedar fragrant? And of what avail is luscious fruit on the high-reaching queen of the mountains? Does she not carry the adventurous mariner through the boisterous waves? Does she not form the arches in the palaces of princes? And soon, Hiram, she will adorn the temple of the Lord, on Mount Sion. My

friend, it yields richer fruit than such as the palate craves.

Whilst they thus conversed, a storm suddenly rolled up upon Lebanon, and it thundered tremendously. The kings stood in the thickness of the forest in silence and full of reverence. A thunderbolt shot out of the cloud, and shattered a cedar from top to bottom, and, with a dreadful crash, it fell upon the side of the mountain. The clouds, however, with tempestuous roaring, passed over.

Then the kings stepped up to the fallen cedar, and thus talked together: What is all earthly greatness before the presence of the Lofty One? He rolls the heavens together as a vesture, and the earth is before him as a drop in the bucket. Who is able to stand before the king of kings?

After some time of silent reflection, whilst they stood before the shivered cedar, Hiram at length said: When we have seen nature in her terrible majesty, it seems almost foolish to think of building a temple to the Lord of creation. What need has He of a temple made by human hands?

Not He; replied Solomon, but man needs it. The immense framework of the creation sinks him down, and associates him with the dust, out of which his body was formed. His own work—as if it embraced and circumscribed the invisible, omnipresent—shall exalt him. The spirit of man is not the bony and fleshy arch of the chest. Hiram, we too are of a divine race. . . . .

The kings stood in silence for a long time. Then said the sovereign of Tyre: Alas, our royal life is like this cedar before the storm!

Well! replied Solomon, it also resembles the cedar after the storm! Do you not perceive, Hiram, what fragrance it now sheds, in its death, over the forest?

89. NATHANEEL.

In the land of Galilee, in a valley between the mountains, lived a man named Nathaneel, who was old and full of days. But in his face there dwelt kindness and grace, and in his heart there never had been found deceit. Therefore the dwellers in the valley said: On Nathaneel there rests a friendly spirit!

He was in the habit of going through the vale to see what good he might do. For he helped the poor man to build his hut, as a refuge from the cold of winter, and to plant trees to afford him shade and shelter from the heat of summer, and taught him to cultivate his field industriously, that he might reap fruit abundantly. Wherever he found a marsh, he went up to it, and said in displeasure: It must not remain thus to poison the air for us! And he subdued the stagnant marsh, so that it produced grass for the cattle, and grain for the sustenance of man.

So also when he found an uncultivated field and waste heath, he stopped and said: See how the neglected land mourns and longs for the hands and help of man.

Then he arose and planted and sowed, and all prospered with him. For Nathaneel was pious, and of childlike spirit. Therefore every work prospered in his hands, and the land was subdued under him.

And when spring came, the nightingales sang, and the blackbirds, in the bushes which his hand had planted, and built their nests there, while the joyous larks soared above the fields of grain which before had been foul bogs, and the habitation of salamanders and serpents.

The people praised and lauded Nathaneel, because they had profit and joy from his labours. But his mind remained concealed from them, and but few fathomed Nathaneel's quiet spirit. For selfishness has no presage of the divine, which appears in childlike form in the retired man.

War soon invaded the land. For the people of the west broke forth like locusts, for the punishment of Israel, that had departed from the way of virtue. They came too into the valley of Galilee.

Then the angel that hovers over the flowers, and supplies them with dew in the stilly night, came to the angel of death, and said: Behold, my brother, Nathaneel is an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile. Why should he see the calamities which sweep over Israel? Transport him then to the land of peace. But let his departure be soft and gentle, like his walk on earth.

The angel of the flowers having thus spoken,

floated away to the son of Nathaneel, and appeared to him in a dream, and said: So, thy father is going to his home. Come, arise, that he depart not all alone, and that thou mayest see the end of the righteous!

The son of Nathaneel arose in haste and made his way over the mountains through Samaria to Galilee; for he dwelt in Jerusalem. And when he came to his father in the vale, he wept over him and ministered to him in his dying hours. This was to the old man like the fragrance of the field, when the dew rests upon the flowers and leaves, and the sun sheds down his genial beams. Nathaneel's spirit was joyful in the embrace of his only son; he renewed his strength, and blessed him with friendly words.

Then the angel of death floated down, and, with soft hand, loosed the bond of life. But the spirit of the glorified ascended to the plains of eternal bliss. And that which faded from him on earth, bloomed there for him above.

90. THE HYACINTH.

Emily was in great trouble that the winter lasted so long; for she loved the flowers, and had a little garden of her own, where she tended the most beautiful flowers with her own hand. Therefore she sighed after spring, and longed for the winter to be gone.

The father then said to her: See, Emily, I have

brought you a flower-bulb; you must, however, yourself nurture it with great care. How can I do that, my father, replied the maid? The snow still lies without, and the ground is as hard as a stone! She did not know that flowers could be raised in pots, for she had never seen it. Her father, however, gave her a flower-pot, filled with soil; and Emily planted the bulbous root in it. But she looked on her father, and smiled, in doubt whether he was in earnest; for she thought there must be a blue heaven over the flower, and the breath of spring floating around it, and that such beauty could not thrive under her hands.

For juvenile simplicity and humility expects not the extraordinary to take place for its sake.

After some days, the earth in the pot began to open up, and on its surface there shot out green germs of leaves, pushing themselves up into the light. Then Emily jumped for joy, and proclaimed to father, mother, and the whole house, the birth of the young plant.

The parents smiled, and said to each other: We shall now see her as careful of her little plant as of a child, with quiet love and hope; so will we rejoice in our Emily, as she in her little charge.

Emily carefully sprinkled the plant with water, and looked down upon it with a smile of pleasure. The father saw, and said: That is right, my child! The sunshine must follow the rain and dew. The beaming of the friendly eye gives its value to the

good deed which the hand performs. Your little plant will grow finely, Emily.

Now the leaves shot forth entirely out of the bosom of the earth, and shone in lovely green; and then was Emily's joy greatly enhanced. Oh, said she, out of an overflowing heart, I would even be satisfied if no flower were to appear at all!

Contented spirit! said the father; more will be granted thee than thou darest to hope. That is the reward of modest contentment. He shewed her the germ of the flower that lay concealed between the leaves.

Emily's care and affection increased daily, as the flower gradually developed itself. With tender hand she sprinkled the water upon it, and asked whether it was enough or too much, and whether, also, it might not be too cold. And when a sunbeam came through the window, walking softly, she carried the plant over into the sunshine, and with her breath blew the dust from the leaves, as the breezes of morning blew around the rose.

O, the sweet union of the most tender love and innocence! said the father. The purer the spirit, the more celestial the love.

With thoughts of her flower Emily went to sleep at night and awoke in the morning. Often in her dreams, too, she saw her hyacinth in full bloom, and when in the morning she was disappointed in not finding it in bloom, she was undisturbed in her feelings, and said, smiling: It may yet bloom!

Sometimes, also, she asked her father, in what colours the flower would probably appear. And after going through all the colours, she would say with cheerful voice: It is all one to me, so it only blooms.

Sweet phantasy! said the father, how beautifully dost thou sport and play around innocent love and infantile hope!

At length the flower bloomed. Twelve bells had opened out in the early morning. Between five broad emerald-green leaves they hung down in youthful beauty. Their colour was rosy, like the blush of the morning red, or the delicate glow on Emily's cheeks. The fragrance that emanated from the flower was balsamy. It was a serene morning in March.

Emily could not comprehend the glory. Her joy was silent, and not expressed in words. She lay on her knees before the flower and gazed upon it.

The father stepped up and looked upon his darling child and her blooming hyacinth, and with deep emotion, said: Behold, what your hyacinth is to you, that are you to us, Emily! She sprang up and embraced her father; and after a long embrace, said, with gentle voice: Oh, my father, that I could give you such joy as it gives me!

91. CAIN'S DREAM.

When Cain had withdrawn into the remote land

towards the east, far away from his parents, and walked to and fro with heavy heart, his wife said to him: Be of good cheer, my dear, for I will soon bear thee a son, who will cause thee joy; therefore, also, shall his name be *Enoch!* Thus she spake. But Cain went all the day in perplexing thoughts; and there was no joy in his heart.

How, said he to himself, shall a father's joys bloom for him who destroyed the joy and hope of his father and of his mother? How could anything good and joyous grow from bad seed!

When evening now approached, a deep sleep fell upon Cain; and there appeared to him a vision, in which he saw the posterity that would proceed from him.

First appeared to him Lamech, his great-grandson; his countenance was distorted; in his hand he wielded a two-edged sword, and his wives, Adah and Zilla, started back before the glittering sword, and trembled. Lamech, however, went out and found a man, to whom he said: You have given me a wound! and then stabbed him. Then the son of the murdered man came and threw himself at Lamech's feet, and wept. But Lamech said: You have given me a bruise! and pierced him through. And then there was great sobbing and mourning of wives and children over the slaughtered ones. And Lamech held his bloody sword before him, and cried out with wrathful voice: Sevenfold was the ven-

geance of Cain, but Lamech's shall be seventy times seven!

The dreamer shuddered—but he saw farther; and lo, there appeared to him Tubal Cain, Lamech's son, digging various metals out of the earth—gold, silver, and iron—and then melting them, and skilfully working them up into all sorts of beautiful instruments. By his side and around him stood precious vessels, golden crowns and silver sceptres; and the iron ploughshare was driven through the earth. Cain now rejoiced in his dream, and said: Happy am I, that at last I wear a pleasant countenance! Blessed be thou, Tubal Cain, my beloved!

Next appeared to him Jubal, brother of Tubal Cain. And Cain saw how Jubal cut down a tree with the axe of his brother. Ah! sighed Cain, he will make himself again a club, and repeat my own crime to my horror!

Jubal, however, carved away and contrived; and behold, he had formed out of the tree a harp and a shepherd's pipe. And when Cain heard the delightful sound which proceeded from the wood and strings, his soul was revived, and he exclaimed: O, Jubal, my offspring! be thou blessed of me before others! How canst thou breathe the breath of joy into the mute wood, and teach song to the dry tree? Blessed be thou of me, Jubal! For thou hast expiated Cain's guilt, and brought peace and joy to man! Peace be with you, ye sons of Lamech! The earth is subdued by your plough, the forest by your

axe, and the wild beast flees before your sword! How splendidly shine the dwellings of men, adorned with gold and silver and precious metals! What of good fortune can yet be wanting to him? Be to me a praise, ye sons of Lamech!

Thus spake Cain in his dream; and there floated around him the sweet sounds of the harp, and the clinking of the hammer at a distance, so that he fell into a deeper slumber than before.

Then he dreamed again; and there appeared two brothers, heads of the people, youths, both of lofty stature, like Adam, and of noble countenance, like Abel.

They stood, like cedars, and both gazed with beaming eyes on one of the golden crowns of Tubal Cain, and on the silver sceptre. A multitude of people crowded on both sides: the youths, however, stood erect above all. The songs of players on the harps and flutes sounded aloud.

Glorious advance of human invention! exclaimed the dreaming grandsire. They have found out the useful and the beautiful; they will now in common produce the noble!

The two youths now approached nearer, and both at once laid claim to the sceptre and to the golden crown. The crowd of people separated into two bodies, as a storm-cloud is parted asunder on a mountain's top, and rolls around the two lofty summits. Each division declares itself for one of the youths, and shouts aloud: For the most deserving!

The brothers separate, and haste to the head of their respective factions and seize the sword with flaming eyes. A fearful tumult arises, and a roaring, as when the tempests lifts up the sea and dashes the boisterous waves against the rocks.

And Cain beheld! and lo! the ploughshares were turned into swords, blooming trees into lances. The fields were trodden down, and the houses burned with fire. Gnashing with their teeth, and foaming with rage, the two armies marched against each other. Brother strove against brother, the sword was driven into the bowels of men, the fields were steeped with blood, and the verdurous earth was strewed with the corpses of the slain. And amid the shouts of the combatants, and the groans of the dying, sounded the music of fifes and of brazen cymbals.

Then the two youths rushed upon each other, and the contest began; blood and sweat ran down from their heads. At length the sword of the younger was thrust through the breast of the elder brother. He sank to the ground, and the victor trod upon his bleeding neck.

Thereupon the golden crown was conferred on the conqueror. Songs of triumph and hymns to the victor resounded on harps and flutes; and in the distance were seen pyramids of flame. The young prince was borne away over the bodies of the slain, with shouts of triumph, on a car crowned with wreaths.

At last the tumult ceased, and there appeared the mothers of the slain, and their wives and betrothed and children, wandering about among the corpses; some tearing their hair and wailing, and others tottering like shades.

Righteous God, it is enough! cried Cain, and awaked out of his dream, and the cold perspiration rolled down from his brows. O thou eternal judge, he exclaimed, wherefore do I yet live to see the fruit of my sowing. Alas! a dream like this is worse than the terror of a tenfold death! Must even the gift of prophecy become a torment to the sinner!

92. THE BUTTERFLY CATCHER.

Little William hopped out into his father's garden early one summer's morning, to gather from his own flower-bed a bouquet of pinks and stock-gilliflowers as a present to his mother, for it was her birth-day.

When he entered the garden, he saw a butterfly fluttering hither and thither. The child soon forgot mother and flowers, and had his heart set on catching the little bird.

At first he pursued it stooping, and with soft step, in order to seize upon it unawares; but with every step his eagerness increased, and the little bird seemed to him the more splendid in its wings and colours the farther it went from him. At length it alighted on a little fruit-tree, which bore its first blossoms, and which stood on the border of his

flower-bed. His father had also given him this little tree. For that reason, and also because it was so small, and bore a beautiful crown, the boy loved it very much.

When he now saw the butterfly sitting on the blossom, he sprang up to it in haste, and struck at it so hardly with his hat, that all the blossoms on the tree fell, and two branches were broken off.

Then he looked down at his feet distressed and perplexed, when he saw the branches lying there, and became aware of his having trodden down all his hyacinths and gilliflowers, and pinks, whilst the butterfly lay dead and torn before him.

And William returned to the house, crying and lamenting, without either butterfly or flowers, an image of that passionate sensuality which eagerly pursues pleasure.

93. THE LINDENS.

An old peasant, of five-and-seventy years of age, sat one summer's day with his children and grandchildren, under the shade of two linden-trees, which he had planted before the door of his house on his wedding-day. The trees were lofty and full of leaves, and their united shade fell refreshingly and delightfully on the happy family circle. Occasionally only, when a gentle breeze shook the branches and leaves, did the sunlight pour its glittering streaks upon the stone table, skipping hither and

thither, and on the brown cheeks and silver hair of the sprightly excellent old man.

The veteran looked around him, and said: Children, these are to me the loveliest trees my hands ever planted. True, said he, I look with reverence on the lofty oak, the queen of the forest, and with thankfulness I receive the fruit of the apple and pear trees, and of the gladsome vine. But these two are dearer to me than all others.

Because you planted them on your wedding-day! said his youngest son, who was then newly married, and smiled on his bride.

Yes, my children, said the old man, and looked with a smile of pleasure on the mother of the family, who sat beside him; that confers on them a higher value in my eyes, they remind me of fifty happy years.

But father, what a quantity of apples or pears you might have had in fifty years, if they had only been trees of that sort, said a daughter, who was the director of household matters, half joking, and half serious.

You are jesting, my frugal daughter, replied the aged father; for you know, as well as I, that man lives not only by that which entereth in at the mouth. He has need also of a higher and edifying life, and to this end needs again symbols, and emblems, and temples. Behold, my children, these lindens are the trees of domestic union! Do they not stand like two priests before our home?

Who, proceeded the old man, will inquire after profit and gain? Certainly, said he, the soft wood of my favourite tree, is not fit for burning, much less for building of houses or palaces. But it is of more use, it becomes itself a friendly dwelling, and affords shade and protection against the heat of the summer day. The aged father looked around, and all, with delighted eyes, followed the skipping lights and the flitting shadows.

It quenches the glowing stream of the light of heaven, and sends it down in round beams. We feel in its cooling shade how lovely the light is. It is as if we could lay hold of it with our hands. Behold, on this account also, these trees seem to me like priests and mediators between the dark earth and the purest light, which flows down upon us from above.

So quiet domestic life brings us nearer to the source of eternal light! We learn what father means, and call Him, who fills heaven and earth, by that friendly name! The old man raised his head as he made this remark; he looked up into the lindens, and just then there fell upon his face a stream of light. He had the appearance of one glorified.

And when a precious rain from heaven, he proceeded, revives the thirsty fields, then, after the first joy, and when the dewy clouds have passed away, it still drops for a long time from the leaves of my trees. It is as if, in every falling drop, it

would shew us, with priestly hand, the blessing and clemency of heaven.

So, also, is domestic life. In its bosom dwells permanent joy. It distributes its gifts, and converts dumb rapture into a calm thankfulness; and in it is the storm of youthful feeling changed into a quiet, long-enduring joyfulness.

And whenever a thunder-cloud comes up, we look out in security on the fearful driving of the storm from under the shelter of the peaceful tree. It does not attract the lightning like the haughty oak, but defends the dwelling from the force of the storm.

And among its leaves, as if it were a sanctuary of innocence and love, frolicsome creatures congregate. Hither the pigeon resorts with his brood, and the house-swallow with its young, in the heat of midday; here the confiding finch, and the variegated goldfinch annually build their nests; here, in the still night and early morning, the nightingale sings its incomparable song; and at its root lie the faithful dog, and the different coloured poultry of the farm-yard; and under its shadow, too, the weary pilgrim rests, and many of the poor here find refreshment.

Oh, my children, pious domestic life treasures up so much of the good and the beautiful. It is the home of friendly complacency, hospitality, and beneficence.

And what a delightful fragrance the modest

flowers of the tree now sheds around it! See the children of summer, with their many-coloured wings, fluttering about its top; and, hark! the buzzing in its branches! On every blossom there is a bee to gather honey and wax for its cells.

So, only in the quiet bosom of domestic life, does joyful industry thrive, and that serene, still pleasure which no repentance embitters.

Under these trees, said the eldest son, were passed the lovely days of our childhood. Here was the play-ground of our youth. All our names are cut on the bark of the tree. Yes! my children, said the aged parent, under this shade you grew up to the serious higher life. The days of childhood require the soft shade and mild light, in order to its developement. Here your bodies were formed to strength and agility, and your souls were exercised in pure childlike dispositions. Here, without care, you moved before the eyes of your parents; your names stand in the bark of the tree, and beside your own are placed the names of your loved ones—beside the children the grandchildren.

Only in the peaceful ground of domestic life grow the spirit of love, and the heavenly confiding feeling of faith and hope.

The aged man looked up, and was silent a moment; then he began anew: How they still remain in full bloom, the high-priestlike trees, and let down their shade upon us! Yet a short time, and then comes autumn and the season of decay; but even the

fading time is beautiful. The bloom shrivelling up first, sinks; then the leaf becomes blanched, and plays in various colours, and now softly loosens itself from the twigs, and floats down to the ground. We then heap up the faded leaves around the trunk of the tree, to defend the roots from the winter's frost, and to supply nourishment; and we gratefully remember the shade and the pleasure which, when green, it afforded us.

When the old father concluded, the children looked sorrowfully on him and their mother, and in many an eye stood the glistening tear.

Then the aged man surveyed the circle with a smiling countenance, and thus spake: My children, must it then not be so? Maternal nature thus wills. She strips the tree, when we no more need its shade, that it may not obstruct the free passage of the streaming light and of the sunbeams to our dwelling. It lays off its verdure only that it may bloom more beautifully and grow higher the next spring. They both fade at the same time, and their leaves fall down together, just as they formed their shade, in unison.

Is it not true, dear, faithful companion of my days, that nothing is wanting? There is quiet, sweet sleep in the well ordered house.

So saying, the old man kindly took his wife by the hand.

The friendly mother smiled on the good old man.

The children suppressed their tears, and the sport

and frolic of the grandchildren resounded under the shade of the familiar lindens.

94. POOR LAZARUS.

One day, when poor Lazarus was lying at the gate of the rich man, and the dogs were licking his sores, there came by another poor man, a day-labourer, by name Zadoc, and saw Lazarus in his misery. And Zadoc pitied him from his heart and went to him, and said: Can I do nothing for you? I too, am a poor man like yourself, and have a flock of children to bring up. But I am free from sores; therefore, let me share the care of you with the dogs, which alone seem to have compassion on you, that they may no longer put me to shame.

He thus spake, and a tear glistened in the friendly eye of the compassionate man. He then reached Lazarus his hand, and said: Come, for I have a hut. There will we take care of you as well as we can; and when my own table fails, I will gather for you the crumbs from the rich man's table.

When he had thus spoken, Lazarus reached him his hand, saying: I gladly accompany you! for, because of your benevolent heart, you have been chosen to open heaven to me, and to sweeten the last hours of my life. I need but little yet; but how shall I rob you of this blessing.

They went on together, and entered a retired little hut with a roof of reeds, Zadoc leading Lazarus

in. The wife of Zadoc bid him welcome, and got ready for him a bed of leaves and moss in the little chamber; and they led poor Lazarus in and laid him down on the bed there. Hanna, Zadoc's wife, brought a bowl of milk, and offered it to Lazarus to drink. But Lazarus said: Reach me a drink of water, for I am thirsty and burning within.

Then Hanna made haste and brought fresh water out of the well, and Zadoc fanned the cheeks of Lazarus with a green olive-branch. And Lazarus fell into a deep sleep, for it was very warm, and about midday. While he slumbered, Zadoc and Hanna drove off the flies and kept him cool. Lazarus smiled in his slumbers, and Zadoc, and Hanna, his wife, looked on him, and said softly to each other: Oh, that he might recover under our care!

Lazarus slept thus for some hours; but as the day was departing, he awoke and lifted up his eyes, and said: You dear people, how you wait on me! Never have I enjoyed a sweeter slumber than with you in your hut. I dreamed that I was borne up on angels' wings. And is it not so? The good man, full of simplicity and love, is he not an angel of God on earth? You have afforded me the most precious, sweetest hours of my life! My heart is full of quiet and bliss; therefore I feel that the hour of my going home has come; for the last moments of the poor good man are to him the beginning and foretaste of the heavenly life.

Thereupon Lazarus reached out his hand to Zadoc and Hanna, and expired with a pleasant smile; and the holy angels carried his soul to the abodes of the blest. Zadoc and Hanna, however, wept over him, and buried him in silence.

And the spirit of the departed Lazarus became the guardian angel of Zadoc and his wife Hanna; and when they both expired on one day, it floated about their death-bed, and a soft breeze cooled the faces of both, and they heard a lovely voice: He that sheweth mercy will find mercy.

95. THE DREAM OF SOCRATES.

The day on which Socrates was to drink the poisonous cup had arrived. Already, early in the morning, his beloved disciples were gathered around him. In sorrowful seriousness they stood about the couch of the philosopher; some wept.

Then the sage sufferer raised his head and said: Why this sober silence, ye loved ones? I will relate to you something agreeable, a dream, which I had last night.

Canst thou sleep, and even dream pleasant dreams? asked the good Apollodorus: I have not closed an eye.

Socrates smiled and said: Thou good Apollodorus, of what value would my past life have been if it did not sweeten my last sleep? Do you not think

Apollodorus, that I had devoted it to *heavenly love?*

Many voices, with pathetic gratitude, replied in the affirmative; Apollodorus could only answer in silence with two glistening tears.

Behold, said Socrates thereupon, whoever devotes his life to her service, on him will she send down the Graces. These privately and invisibly adorn all his hours, whether they be hours of joy or of suffering, with heavenly glory, and surround them with a balmy fragrance.

But above all are the gentle sisters busy about him in the last hour of his life. For that is a more solemn hour than all the rest, and most needs heavenly illumination. Just as the last hour of day is the most beautiful. The evening red flows around it, like a stream of light from elysium.

But then follows the dark night; interrupted the quiet Xenophon.

For our hemisphere, replied Socrates. Is not our evening red, the morning red of another hemisphere?

Socrates proceeded: Now hear, ye loved ones! For as the realm of Hades, as the living call it, will very soon become to me a realm of light, as the spirits of the dead will call it, and I am nearer to it than you all, so my discourse may perhaps disclose much that is new. So hearken then!

The Graces themselves leave their favourite in his last hour. For they soar away before him, and prepare for him the heavenly life, after they have

adorned his earthly. But they leave him not alone. They send to the departing three other spirits, attired with celestial beauty.

These three are *sleep*, the twin-brother, and at the same time the friendly image of death: Dream, the image of past life, but also the harbinger of another world, that soars between the other two, and Death, more glorious and beautiful than the others, and clothed in the celestial glow of morning. Behold, Apollodorus, the first two have not deserted me the last night, and the third appeared to me in the distance. How could I fear his approach? I expect him with longing desire.

The eyes of his disciples filled with tears, and there reigned in the prison a sorrowful silence.

After a while Socrates proceeded: I had almost forgotten my dream! Sleep had strewed his poppy-seeds thickly over me, and indeed, I needed strength for the task, which I shall this day fulfil with serene spirit. But not only was the strengthening of the body granted me in the balmy arms of sleep; the kind Dream-god brightened my spiritual vision.

Then I saw a beautiful youth come in to me. On his countenance were that still composure, and calm sobriety, which belong to the form divine. In his right hand he bore a burning torch, and a reddish glow, like that of evening, was diffused over the darkness of my prison.

The deeper and more gloomy the night of my prison seemed to me, the lovelier and the more

charming were the brightness and the form of the youth.

Then the godlike youth gradually let down the torch; but I seized his arm, as it seemed to me, and exclaimed: What are you going to do? He replied: I am extinguishing the torch!

O! I entreat, do it not! It is to me a friendly light in the darkness of my prison.

He, however smiled, and said: It is the torch of the earthly life. Thou hast no farther need of it. For as soon as it is extinguished, thine earthly eye closes forever, and thou soarest aloft on my hand to a higher world, where a pure and heavenly light beams around thee. Of what use to thee any longer is the self-consuming earthly torch?

O, then, put out the torch! I cried, and awoke. I found myself in the gloom of my prison. Alas, I was troubled that it was but a dream. Yet lo! there comes the cup indeed, which will fulfil it!

The keeper of the prison entered with the boy that carried the cup of poison. Then there was lamentation and sobbing among the disciples of Socrates. Even the jailer wept.

96. THE MUSCLES.

A father returned home from the sea-coast, and brought to his little son some beautiful muscle-shells and cockle-shells, which he had gathered on the sea-shore. The child's joy was indescribably great in

examining the beautiful and variegated formations of the sea, and he took a nice little box, and preserved them in it with care and love, and invited his playmates in to see them. This occasioned a great talk among the children of the village about the splendid shells and casket of the boy. He counted them every morning, and each day discovered new beauties in them, and gave to each a name.

For the love and joyousness of juvenile simplicity is inventive, and rich in lovely words.

But after some months, thought the father, I will now afford him a joy and ecstacy beyond comparison. We will go down to the sea-shore. There shall you first admire the multitude of splendid shells, and select for yourself as many as your heart can wish.

As they reached the sea at the time of ebb-tide, the boy stood amazed at the multitude of muscles and cockle-shells, which lay scattered about in great numbers, and went to and fro collecting them. But one seemed to him more beautiful than another, and he went on continually exchanging what he had for what he found, attracted by something new. So he proceeded, musing and doubting, and quite perplexed. At last he became weary of stooping and searching, and choosing, and threw all he had away: and when he returned home empty and disheartened, he even gave away those that had afforded him so much pleasure.

His father was distressed, and said: I have done unwisely, and my folly has robbed the child of his simplicity, and both of us of enjoyment.

97. THE NIGHTINGALE IN A CAGE.

A countryman came, one day, into the splendid mansion of a rich nobleman, and there heard the clear notes of a bird in a golden cage. He stepped up, and behold! it was a nightingale. He stood leaning on his staff in sorrowful mood and listened.

The servants of the nobleman went up and asked him what was so strange, that he stood so thoughtful.

He replied: It is surprising and wonderful to me, how you and your master can tolerate the pensive, mournful song of the captive bird in your splendid dwelling.

You fool, answered one of the servants, does the nightingale's song seem mournful to you in your fields and bushes?

By no means, replied the farmer: but he fills my heart with silent joy and admiration.

Do those then sing in other tones and differently from these? asked the servant, with a scoffing smile.

Certainly, said the countryman. Our nightingales, among the green and blooming branches, proclaim the praises of renewed creation; they sing under the blue open heavens the song of freedom, and over their brooding mates the joyous song of love.

At these words, the servants raised a loud laugh of contempt, and treated the countryman as a fool. He, however, made no reply, and returned to his country-house and his farm.

98. THE FORGET-ME-NOT.

A mother sat with Adelaide, her first-born daughter, beautiful, lovely and blooming, on a hill that bounded the quiet vale in which they dwelt. At the foot of the hill flowed a clear brook, whose banks were clothed with fresh verdure, and flowers, and waving reeds. Here the tender mother sat, lost in sweet feelings and thoughts of the past. Meanwhile the little girl hopped down to the border of the brook and plucked a bunch of forget-me-nots, and with an affectionate smile, reached it to her mother. Then she asked, in her innocence: Why is this flower called forget-me-not?

You know very well, said the tender mother, what the prayer *forget-me-not* means, and is intended to express. When you utter it, behold, then the language of your heart *floats* in the breath of your mouth, and a sound is the sign of your feelings. When, however, you offer this flower to any one, with the same wish, then the language of your heart *blooms* in this azure-blue flower. Do you not think its simple form is well adapted to this purpose? Nor did it need fragrance, any more than pure feeling demands many words.

But where probably did the delicate flower obtain its lovely name? asked Adelaide.

The mother replied: Behold, my dear child, nature is as a mother to mankind. She everywhere holds out the beautiful to him that loves her, and in the beautiful the good and true, when he seeks it and will know it; for man must possess and recognise it in himself before he can comprehend the image which nature presents him. She gives him only the resemblance, the higher he must cultivate in himself.

Thereupon the mother drew out a miniature painting, and asked Adelaide whether she knew the likeness? O, how should I not, she replied; it is father, who is now abroad! O, how beautiful! I see him smile; I hear him speak. I too, Adelaide, said the mother, with deep emotion. But would that be the case, if we did not bear him in our hearts? And even if the image were much more beautiful, we should not see him smile, nor hear him speak. You would not then gaze thus upon it, nor say: It is my father!

Adelaide, when I was yet a girl like you, and your father lived across the brook, he came over, and we loved each other. When he left us again, I accompanied him to this rivulet. Before parting from me, however, he plucked a little flower, gave it to me, and said, with soft, tender tone: Lina, forget me not! Ever since, the simple flower always recalls to me the friendly word.

Then Adelaide looked at the flower, and asked whether it had its pretty name from that time. No! replied her mother; but in the same way has it first received it, and the true and good remain everlastingly young and new. At that time I first felt the sense and signification of the name; for that which is not apprehended with the heart is not understood.

I loved your father, added the mother; he was a noble young man! So the flower became to me an emblem of *my* love, and of every love; and this it will always be to me!

But how, inquired Adelaide, is the flower an image of love, my dear mother? Has it anything in its form, on account of which it was chosen for that purpose?

That, too, my dear child, answered the mother, will you ascertain when you once become better acquainted with your heart; for, behold, it grows and blooms in quiet modesty and friendly innocence. And therein, also, does love make itself manifest. In it there is no stormy nature nor passion. Alas! Adelaide, there is a false love, which is not worthy of the name.

And see, continued her mother, the flower grows and blooms on the clear rivulet which flows through our vale. So, also, only in a pure innocent heart does love dwell; then, however, it embellishes and ennobles life, just as our flower does the pure mirrory surface of the brook. Is it not as if it overflowed with crowns of flowers, and as if little stars

glittered in the heavens, which it mirrors back in its ripples! Behold, my child, love thus exalts life; and therefore it is so quiet and harmonious in our home, because it dwells there.

And now, my Adelaide, look at the beautiful colour of the simple flower! It is the colour of heaven. So, also, is love a heavenly plant, springing from celestial seed and bearing celestial blossoms!

Thus spake the mother; and then, with a blissful smile, reached to her daughter one of the flowers, and said: And you, too, Adelaide, my loved child, forget me not!

Adelaide leaned on her mother; a tear of joy glistened in her eye, and she said: I have no need of the flower, dear mother, nor of the symbol. I have yourself.

The mother observed: So then, remember thereby the teaching of the flower out of the mouth of the mother!

99. THE CREATION OF THE CATERPILLAR.

When the first parents of mankind had been banished from Eden for their sin, and pious Abel had poured out his life under the sword of his brother, the angel of death came before the Lord, and said: The judgment of death has been pronounced on the earth, and man shews himself worthy of his fate. So, then, give me power to bring forth some creatures as ministers of corruption,

and to remodel others, that they may aid me in my work.

The Lord nodded assent. Then the angel of Jehovah flitted down and gave to the lion his terrible paw, and jaws thirsting after blood; his roar, for the first time, made the plains to quake for fear; and instead of the frizzly hair which had adorned his neck, there hung from it the yellow mane. The tiger and leopard, which before had dwelt among the lambs, acquired the spotted skin, and with it malicious bloodthirstiness. Vultures and eagles screamed in the air, and carried death and destruction into the vales below with their crooked talons. In the clefts of the rocks there lurked the poison-swollen adders.

The guardian angel of earth mourned. There was a discord in nature. Even the angel of death was affrighted at his own formations; but he consoled himself, saying: Does not man himself fashion his own world? He despised quiet and peace, and preferred conflict to control. How can I then be otherwise than terrible to a polluted world?

He said, and gave to the frightful monsters the wilderness for their abode, and the hours of night for their devastation; for with the celestials even severe righteousness is not without love.

Thereupon the angel of destruction flew to the abode of the first human family, and alighted in a little garden, where Mirza, Abel's beloved and mourning sister, was cultivating trees and flowers.

It was a miniature image of Eden, abounding in cooling shades and delightfully fragrant plants and flowers.

Here the celestial messenger stood thinking, being affected by the innocence and love of Mirza. Must I create a new torment for the gentle sufferer? said he. It must be so! To the pious mind joy blooms even out of sufferings. And does she not belong, too, to the race of the fallen? The seed of sin is eternal! Here, too, perishableness may have its minister!

He let down his wand, and out of the dust, which he disturbed, sprung up a voracious caterpillar. It began immediately to destroy the plants all around, and gnawed the leaves and flowers of the nearest tree.

Mirza soon after came into her garden, and was terrified when she discovered the wasting on the leaves and flowers. She then went nearer, and saw the strange creature with gnawing tooth on the branches. Mirza was still more alarmed, and ran to her brother Seth. Behold, she cried, a serpent is destroying my bushes and sitting on the branches.

Seth went at once into the garden, and when he saw the caterpillar, he said: Ah, you are mistaken, Mirza! Your fear has made the animal more terrific to you. The serpent crawls on his belly; this creature has feet, and is another worm, that lives, like a sheep, on leaves. I will destroy it! And the boy

shook the tree, so that the caterpillar fell to the ground.

Oh no, entreated Mirza, do not kill it! Do not we too eat the fruit of the tree? The creature does not know that it is my garden and my delight. Don't kill it then. I will provide that it shall have enough and not injure the plants.

The boy replied: Are not the animals subject to us, and given into our power? But, replied Mirza, is it not better to exercise mildness and gentleness than violence? So let it live!

Then Mirza made an enclosure around the caterpillar, and gave it of the leaves and flowers of the trees evening and morning, more than it could devour.

When the celestial messenger beheld this, he was affected, and said: Man has not yet entirely lost the divine image. He can even do good to his enemy, and repay evil with good. The angel stood musing; and then spake, saying: It is proper that the beautiful should be added to the good! He touched the worm with his wand, and the caterpillar acquired the wonderful power of building its own tomb. All this occurred about the time of evening twilight.

The next morning early, Mirza went out into the little garden and looked into the enclosure of the caterpillar, but did not see it. O, it is sleeping yet, said she, tenderly, and I will not wake it, but gather leaves while the dew yet lies on them. So she collected leaves and flowers. For Mirza had begun to

love the animal through her kindly attentions, and indeed she carried all nature on her heart, since Abel was no more her companion.

When Mirza now returned with the buds and leaves, she found a little casement, bright and beautiful as a silver white cloud. She stood amazed, and called to her father and mother and all about the house, and exclaimed: See what a thing I have brought up! It is now dead, and rests in a wonderful grave. Who knows but it will come forth again.

Thus spake Mirza, with prophetic spirit. She, however, knew not that she possessed the gift of prophecy.

Adam, her father, said: Who can bury such a thing! The beginning and end are concealed from the eyes of man. Yet this new event may not be without instruction and wisdom. Come, let us take it into our hut! So they carried the case of the animal into their dwelling; and Mirza said: I am now glad that I have tended it unto death.

So now the encasement of the unknown animal lay in the habitation of men, an image to them of Abel, the first that fell asleep (in death). When they were now assembled one morning, and spake of death with sorrowful heart, lo, there was suddenly heard a soft whizzing, and the grave-case moved of itself. They all now gathered round it, and gazed on the shell full of silent expectation.

Then suddenly the round silver tomb burst open;

and behold, there came a living creature out of the close encasement, and it quivered and unfolded a double pair of wings. The wings were blue, as the sapphire vault of heaven on a clear day, edged with a golden fringe, and each wing was a span long and broad. And on the bursted envelope lay a reddish drop, like blood. The new-born creature soared aloft over the fragrance of the blooming trees with buzzing wings.

Holy wonder and joy filled the heart of the first of mankind, and they thought of Abel, the first fruit of them that sleep. And their eyes were opened, that they saw the form of Abel as of an angel.

And they heard the voice of the angel of death, saying: Behold, out of death springs up life, and days roll on forever. To a pure mind and childlike faith, it is given, to behold truth in symbol.

100. THE VALE OF THE BRAMINS.

In one of the most beautiful countries of India, under a perpetually serene sky lies a vale begirt with mountains, which, since ancient days, has been the residence of the pious worshippers of the holy Brama.

Hither, over the mountains, there came one day a young Indian prince, and desired to speak with the father and head of the peaceful Bramin race. His wish was granted him. An old man of tall, noble form received the unknown youth. Welcome,

young stranger, said he, to our peaceful vale, whether you have come to us intentionally, or have lost your way!

The former, replied the youth; I come designedly.

The old man interrupted him, and said: The stranger is always welcome to our vale. We practice here the sacred right of hospitality towards every one, without asking who he is or wherefore he comes. For we still hold to the old custom of not inquiring the name and wishes of the stranger until after the third day. If, therefore, there is nothing urgent with thee, that requires our speedy assistance, come as a man and brother into our circle, and enjoy with a glad heart what we can offer you.

The young prince bowed, and followed the aged Bramin into the cooling shade of a lofty palm, where a numerous family circle was assembled.

Men and women, young men and maidens, all of noble figure and kindly nature, came to meet the stranger, and saluted him with as much frankness as if they had known and loved him for a year. Children skipped about him and presented him flowers.

Oh, what an abode of innocence and joy! sighed the young prince.

These dwell together here always, replied the old man. For Brama lives in our hearts, therefore our senses never grow old; and we see him in each of his creations and gifts, therefore joy never fails us; and so also we have no wants which we

cannot satisfy. A deeper involuntary sigh heaved the breast of the youth.

You are fatigued by your journey, said the old man, and beckoned. Immediately two young men came forward and brought a foot-tub to wash the feet of the stranger, and two blooming girls offered to him of the choicest fruit of the vale.

The young prince refused to have his feet washed. It is the custom of the sacred law of hospitality, replied the old man, and a refreshment which the strong rightfully and cheerfully extend to the weary. Here no distinction is made between master and servant. We respect, in every wanderer, the human countenance which proclaims him to us as a son of Brama, who is perfect love.

The young prince was silent, but a glowing red was diffused over his cheeks, and his knees trembled.

He is not well! said the youths who had prepared the bath for his feet; his knees tremble. Nor has he partaken of our fruits; said the girls compassionately.

The old man went up to him and took his quivering hand: My son, said he, the heat of the day has overcome you. I will lead you into our dwelling, that you may enjoy sleep. It will renew your strength, and prepare you for joyfully participating with us in the holy festival, which awaits us tomorrow.

The youth allowed himself to be led into the

house by the good old man. Here was a couch spread with herbs of balmy fragrance, and over the herbs was spread a coverlet, glistening white, as newly fallen snow.

Here, said the Bramin, here you may slumber in quietness, for you rest in the arms of the all-loving Brama, who blesses this vale. That shall these tender, delicately fragrant herbs testify to you, on which you will recline! And these snow white coverings are an emblem of innocence!

While the old man was speaking, two boys entered, bringing a bowl full of dark red wine. He took it out of their hands, and said to the princely youth: Behold, we eat only the fruits of the field, and of the trees and vines, as nature presents them to us. But for the sick and weary we also press the grapes. It is the only blood we shed, added he, smiling; but it is done without occasioning any sighs, and indeed, to quiet sighing. Drink, my dear, it will do your heart good.

The young man took the cup with trembling hand, and whilst he drank, an awful shudder came over him.

As he handed back the cup, a soft solemn song sounded in the distance. What is that? inquired the prince. It is the evening hymn, replied the Bramin. The sun is going down. We offer Brama our united thanks for the light of heaven, which he has sent down upon us, and for the day's life which he has granted us. We believe that only the prayer

of love and joy can be well-pleasing to the most benevolent and most beneficent Being; therefore we offer him our thanks in song, and unitedly. Nor in our prayer shall we be unmindful of you; for are you not now one of our family-circle? Brama grant thee quiet sleep and a joyful waking up!

So saying, with friendly spirit, the old man left the prince. But the latter covered up his head, and could not look into the face of the lofty, noble man, nor return his salutation.

The young man was now alone, but no sleep would close his eyes. It was to him as if the blood boiled in his veins; he heard the beating of his heart. The images of the past flitted incessantly before him, and the brighter and clearer it was without, the darker was it in his soul. The clear moonlight night which played through the rustling of the leaves into his chamber, seemed to him as if it would never end. He longed for the break of day. At last he fell into a feverish slumber, often disturbed by fearful dreams. He awoke with the first gleam of the morning twilight. A lovely responsive hymn, sung by male and female voices, sounded in the distance, more serious and solemn than the evening hymn of the preceding day. It was the united morning hymn of the Bramin family at sunrise.

The young prince was inexpressibly affected by it. He wished to unite his voice in the universal petition, but was not able.

The door of his chamber then opened softly, and the old man looked through the opening. Anxious about the youth, whom he believed to be sick, he could not wait until he arose. He intended, if he were still asleep, softly to close the door and return.

When he found the stranger awake, he kindly saluted him, and inquired of his health. The youth was deeply moved, and exclaimed: Oh, what love meets me in this vale!

My son, said the Bramin, we worship a great Father, and love every one of his creatures, as a creation of his wisdom and goodness, but every man as his child and image, and all as our brethren. From childhood up, accustomed to simplicity of heart and every childlike thought, this has become natural to us, and we wish no thanks that are not due to us. You will now celebrate with us the joyful festival of love.

The old man had scarcely uttered these words, when the youth broke out into a flood of tears, and begged the Bramin to accompany him out of the vale, on to the way by which he had come.

The old man was astonished at the singular stranger, and led him in silence to the way that led out of the vale.

The youth then commenced: I leave your vale forever. I thought to find peace in the midst of you, but I have suffered the most awful torments of my life.

I do not understand you, interrupted the Bramin,

looking at the stranger with surprise. In our peaceful vale—

Your vale, reverend father, rejoined the youth, is the dwelling-place of peace and innocence.

There falls among us, said the old man, with celestial serenity, no tear but the tear of joy and gratitude; no drop of blood moistens the earth; and no sigh of oppressed innocence profanes Brama's breath. The ground which supports and nourishes us, the atmosphere which surrounds us, is pure and unstained.

But I, cried the young prince, I am an impure, profane! That it is which converts your innocent vale into an abode of miseries to me.

The old man was silent, and a stream of compassion and sympathy flowed out of his great eye upon the unfortunate youth.

They stood on the confines of the vale. The youth again broke the silence, and said: Reverend old man, your gentleness breaks my heart! Oh, if it might also heal it! Yet listen now to my unfortunate history.

Behold, I am the son of king Amandua; I was heir to his throne and the dominion of India. But these hands are stained with innocent blood. The only son of a widow fell by my sword. Blood, and tears, and sighs lie heavy upon me. The image of my awful act troubled me. I deserted the palace, and hoped in your vale to find the rest which I sought.—I found the bitterest hours of my

life. Your peace became my torment. Your innocence seemed to me like a severe reproach of my guilt; and every friendly look of your love fell upon the darkness of my heart like a vivid flash of lightning on a dark, gloomy night.

Alas, I betook myself—myself that I would flee—to this dwelling of peace. Pardon me, and, if you possibly can, pray for me. I go, where I belong—to the Fakires.

With these words he left the Bramin, and the peaceful vale. The old man looked after him a long time, whilst he climbed the mountain. Then he lifted his hands towards heaven, praying, and returned to the circle of those who kept the festival.

101. OSSIAN.

Ossian, Fingal's son, the blind poet of Morven, sat one day, at the going down of the sun, in the entrance of his rocky hall. Malvina, Toshar's blooming daughter, stood by the silent old man.

He asked: Has the sun already fulfilled his course; and is the evening-red in the western sky?

It is this moment setting, answered Malvina, with a sigh.

Wherefore do you sigh, Malvina? inquired the blind old man.

Oh, my father, replied the maid, that you see no morning nor evening twilight.

Nor, alas! added he, with a smile, the amiable

countenance of my daughter Malvina. But do I not hear the sound of your sweet voice, Malvina, with the tones of my harp, and the floating of spirits around its chords?

How, asked Malvina, can you perceive the notes of invisible spirits, my father?

By him only, Malvina, said the old man, to whom the external world is dead and buried, is the soft murmuring of the higher world heard. Behold, Malvina, his eye is already closed before death comes, and the earth is to him enveloped in night and gloom. As the twinkling of the stars shines only upon the veiled earth, so do sonorous beams come down upon him from above, and touch the strings of his harp, and the chords of his seeing spirit. Reach me the harp, Malvina.

Malvina reached him the harp in silence, and the blind old man beat vehemently on its strings.

102. INSTRUCTION.

One beautiful evening of spring, said a father to his wife: Let us go out to the field, and lay us down on the hillock, that we may enjoy a view of the setting sun. It will be a lovely evening.

The two children, a boy and a girl, on hearing these words, said: We will go ahead and await you on the hill! And so saying they skipped off.

Then the sober father, with his affectionate wife, walked out, and talked of the beauties of nature,

and of their children; the father out of the treasures of his wisdom, and the mother out of a tender heart.

When they now reached the hill and ascended, the children were already there, and shouted them a welcome. They had also brought with them a white lamb which they were bringing up.

As the sun was now going down gloriously, the parents looked upon the scene, and were full of emotion. The father lifted up his voice, and spake to his children of the creation of the universe, of the host of the stars, and of the exalted creator of nature; who made the heavens and the earth, and the sea, and all that in them is, and called them to behold the sun in his glory, and said: It is a wonderful work of the Most High!—for, thought he: It is now time that I teach them heavenly wisdom.

When the father had finished these words, the children exclaimed suddenly: O see there, dear father and mother, how lovely and beautiful! For they had dressed off the lamb with flowers, and it stood like a bride, and ate the grass of the hill out of their hands.

The father then looked at the mother, and shook his head with a serious countenance. The mother, however, smiled and said: Oh, my dear, leave them yet in their childish simplicity! They do not yet need restraint and the sober lessons of instruction. They need only love, and of that is indeed the kingdom of heaven.

Then the father and mother pressed the children

to their hearts, and rejoiced with them over the dressed up lamb.

103. THE PILGRIMS.

Shew me the state of man, my brother, on earth! Thus spake the spirit of a child, named Adonijah, who, early removed from earth, took up his abode on a star under the guidance of the celestials.

The tutelar angel smiled and led the boy to an eminence. Beneath lay a misty valley, full of chasms and steep paths. Behold, said he, an image of earth! Do you see the travellers?

What means this multitude? asked Adonijah. They seem to press on with zeal.

They all haste to one goal, replied the angel. Before them it glimmers obscurely; but they must make their weary way through the valley. The road is uneven and toilsome.

Love, said Adonijah, conquers all. It too will illuminate their path, that they miss not the goal.

See! said the angel, and Adonijah beheld.

One of the pilgrims turned aside and took another path, saying: This seems to me the better way! and some followed him. Then a crowd of the others fell upon them and abused them, and trampled them under foot.

What does this mean? asked Adonijah, full of wonder.

The angel replied: They are thus treated, because

they have left the broad road, and wish to walk in another path.

Strange! said the boy. But they would all certainly reach one home. And when these go astray, why have not those tender sympathy? And how too can they know before they reach the goal, which is the right way?

Leave these, said the celestial, and see those others! Adonijah beheld some lying weary of their journey. Oh, he cried, that some may come, who will revive them! There came along some, laden with fruit and rich dainties. Oh, said the child, that is kind! They will refresh and restore the weary. Then both will pursue their journey more joyfully.

Adonijah gazed full of expectation, but lo, they who bore the fruit passed by and paid no attention to the worn-out pilgrims. Heavenly Father! exclaimed the boy, are they indeed brothers, and such hardness of heart!

They are men! answered the angel. See!

Adonijah looked. One of the pilgrims stumbled over a stone, because he had not proceeded circumspectly. He lay on the edge of a declivity. Oh, cried the boy, let some one come to reach him the hand and help him up. There came one, who laughed deridingly at the fallen one. A second kicked him, and sent him still nearer the precipice. A third contemptuously threw him over.

Adonijah shuddered, and exclaimed: Is that the

earth!—The angel opened his eyes, that he might see some who had reached the summit. They walked on in peace, and with eyes directed onwards. The glory of the not far distant goal already beamed on their countenances.

Adonijah beheld, and embraced his celestial guide, saying: Oh, happy for me, that I so easily finished my course!

104. THE VIOLET.

Little Maria went out into the country with her parents on a morning in spring, and asked: Why is the violet loved so much? It is praised in many beautiful songs, and as soon as it blooms every one seeks for it, and rejoices when he finds one. Thus spake Maria to her mother.

The mother replied: It is the first gift of spring after the cold winter. We enjoy the good and the beautiful most, when we have long been deprived of them.

And it is received with more gratitude, said the father, because spring gives the flower so quickly and so early. Whoever does good promptly, shows that he does it cheerfully, and multiplies thanks. This sanctifies the joy.

Is not the violet also called the flower of modesty? asked Maria.

It well deserves the name, said her mother. For it grows in retirement, low down amid the bushes,

and yet blooms as beautifully, and smells as fragrantly as any of the other flowers.

And we value it and seek after it no less, said the father, and rejoice when we find it.

It is lovely too, exclaimed Maria; that nature presents the modest beautiful flower so early!

She would by that, said the mother, smiling, signify to children, that the beautiful and good must bloom early in them, in order afterwards to bear wholesome fruit.

And, said the father, spring, in imparting her first lovely gift so modestly, leads us to expect that she will yet offer us much that is great and glorious. For, only there, where modesty and humility dwell, can the noble and the great thrive.

Now, on the way under the thorns, Maria found a full-blown violet. But a large dew-drop glistened in the blue cup of the flower, and, by its weight, bent it to the ground.

The little girl stood looking at the flower, and said: The heavy drop will break the violet and sink it to the earth.

Oh no, Maria, answered the mother, the brilliant drop glitters indeed in the lovely cup like a pearl; but soon the sun will warm the drop and evaporate it, and then the violet will lift itself up blooming more beautifully and smelling more fragrantly.

It grows too, said the father, under the thorns: but they do not shade it too much; they defend the delicate flower from the cold breath of night and

the stormy wind. For it is a foster-child of celestial love.

Then Maria looked at the flower, and said: Then I will not pluck the violet, until it shall be strengthened by the dew-drop, and rises up.

How easily, said the mother thereupon, simplicity and love believes in the heavenly!

Because itself is heavenly, said the father.

105. THE FIRST SABBATH.

The sixth day of the creation was drawing to a close. The sun had run his course. The dusk of evening had began to spread itself over the young earth. The first-born son of the creation stood on a hill of Eden, in company with Eloah, his guardian angel and guide.

It became still darker and darker round about the hill, the twilight passed into night, and covered the hills and vales like a misty veil. The songs of the birds, and the glad voices of animals were silent; and even the playful breezes seemed to be slumbering.

What is that? inquired the man of his heavenly guide, in a soft tone. Will the young creation cease to sink back into its ancient chaos?

Eloah smiled and said: It is the rest of the earth.

Now appeared the light of heaven; the moon arose, and the host of stars shone out in brilliant splendour.

Man looked up towards heaven with pleasing astonishment; the angel of the Lord looked down with satisfaction on the gazing son of earth. The night was stiller, the nightingales sang louder and clearer.

Eloah touched man with his wand. He laid himself down on the hill and slept. He had his first dream. The Lord created his companion for him.

When now the morning twilight appeared, Eloah touched the sleeper. He awoke, and felt life and power streaming through him. The hills and valleys burst out of the mists; the young light came down and skipped on the surface of the rivers of Eden; the sun arose and brought the day. Man beheld the newly-formed woman, mother of the the living. Wonder and delight filled his soul.

Behold! said Eloah, out of rest comes forth the divine; therefore shalt thou sanctify this day of rest to the Lord.

106. THE LITTLE TREE.

A little boy saw his father plant a wild apple tree, and asked: What will you make out of the knotty thing? I would certainly not give it the room, said the boy.

But the father replied: Judge not too soon, my child. Do you know this tree, that you call a crabbed thing?

Know! said the boy. It is easy to see what it is.

Its external form, replied the father, you discern well enough; but not that which lies concealed within. Lo, this unseemly tree may become a high, beautiful tree. It may, in a few years, bloom and bear fruit, and will then please and refresh us. Yet this may not be; for the power by which it can effect this in future, still remains inactive and concealed in the tree.

Some time after, William again saw his father at the tree. He put in a stake near it, and bound it to that.

Why do you do that? asked the boy. You take away its freedom.

The father replied: That the wind may not destroy it nor cast it to the ground; and that it may grow up smooth and straight.

Then the father cut several branches from the stem, loosened the soil about it, and surrounded it with thorns, to keep off the cattle.

See, said the father, I love the little tree, for the living power which lies hidden within it. And therefore I take care of it, that the hidden virtue within may grow and thrive.

In the beginning of the next spring the father took the boy again to the tree;—he had cut a scion from another fruit tree. Now he took his knife and made a strong cut, so that the top of the tree fell to the ground. Alas! alas! cried the boy, troubled and frightened. Now, indeed, are your pains for nothing!

The father smiled, and engrafted the scion on the stem of the tree, and bound it up carefully. He then said: Had the tree remained in the woods, it would have grown up crooked and knotty, as it chanced to be, and never have borne eatable fruit. But I have directed its growth and its internal virtue. Before the spring comes on in its full strength, I have engrafted on the tree something of a nobler sort, that it may extend to it its sprouting energy, and in time to come bear delightful blossoms and fruit.

The tree soon extended its branches and twigs, and assumed a healthful appearance, for it bore buds and blossoms; and in autumn the boughs were bent down with the golden and ruddy apples.

What do you think now? said the father to his son.

Oh, he replied with joy, it has become a beautiful, thankful tree!

See, said the father, how it stretches out its full branches to you! I now give it to you William! It shall henceforth be yours. It has now reached its destination!

107. LIFE AND DEATH.

Theodora was an affectionate, kind-hearted girl. All who knew her, loved her; and above all, her little brother Edmund; and she was no less devotedly attached to him. Dorchen suddenly became

ill, and Edmund was very much troubled about her suffering so much; for it never entered his mind that she could die; and he had never seen a dead person, and knew not yet what death and dying were.

As Dorchen lay in pain on her bed, Edmund thought of what she might enjoy, and went to the fields to seek flowers; for he knew she loved them.

But whilst he was gone, Dorchen had died, and they had put on her a white shroud.

Then Edmund stepped into the chamber where she lay, and before he reached the bed, pointed to the flowers; but the little girl saw them not. Then he called: See, Dorchen, what I bring you! but she heard not. Edmund now approached nearer and looked on his sister, and said: She is asleep! I will lay the flowers on her breast, that she may enjoy them when she wakes up. Then will she say: Edmund has done that!

Thus he did softly, and smiled. Then he went to his mother, and said: I have plucked some flowers for Dorchen, such as she loves most of all. But she is sleeping. So I have laid them on her bosom, that she may enjoy them when she wakes.

The mother wept, and said: Yes, she sleeps well, but she awakes not again.

Then said William: If she sleeps, why then shall she not awake? The mother could make no reply; for she covered her face to conceal her tears.

The boy wondered at it, and said: Mother, why do you weep?

108. THE WAY.

Abraham, the father of the faithful, dwelt in the land of Haran, whither he had removed with his father, Terah, and with his cattle, and all that he possessed. When his father had now died in a good old age, Abraham buried him and mourned over him, and prepared to enter into his inheritance in the fruitful land of Haran. Then came the word of the Lord to Abraham, and said: Go from thy native land, and from thy kindred, and out of thy father's house, into a land which I shall shew thee.

And Abraham did as the Lord commanded him, and obeyed, and went out, not knowing whither he went.

After he had gone some days' journey from Haran, there met him on his way, travellers of Haran, his home, merchants who were returning from Egypt and Arabia, with camels and many precious wares.

They spoke to Abraham, and asked him whither he was going. Abraham replied: Into a far land. They then inquired farther: What is the name of the country, and what road leads to it? Abraham answered, and said: I know not the name of the land, neither do I know the way.

Then the merchants laughed and ridiculed Abra-

ham, and said: Who, then, will shew you the way through the desert, and guide you, that you do not perish with all your company? Abraham replied: He who has called me to go, will also conduct me safely.

The merchants then went on their way making sport of him; and Abraham, too, went forward, and reached the land of promise.

109. THE ETHIOPIAN SLAVE AND THE GREEK,

OR THE TWO-FOLD INSTRUCTION.

Philemon, elder of the church at Smyrna, went one day with glad countenance to bishop Ignatius, and said: I have won a soul for the kingdom of the Lord. Behold, an Ethiopian slave desires to become a Christian.

The bishop asked: Does he know the Lord and his word?

Philemon replied: He has been without instruction from his youth up; and his soul wants understanding. But since he has seen the church congregation, he wishes to become a Christian. Why should we not baptize him?

Ignatius answered, and said: There was a rich man who had many fields around his dwelling, and beautiful gardens planted with all manner of trees and shrubbery. But in the midst arose a hill which overlooked the surrounding country for a great dis-

tance. Then said the owner to his gardener: I am troubled that this hill rises so naked in the midst of fruitful pastures and fields, and yields neither shade nor fruit. What a lovely sight it will be if we plant it with lofty shade-trees.

The gardener answered: That has long been my thought and wish. Instead of the bare rock and unfruitful bushes, the new planting will be an embellishment of the country.

Then the master directed him to go and take out of his nursery the choicest trees, and plant them on the hill.

The gardener smiled, and said: On this naked and stony soil? There would be a mourning of the noble trees; they would wither and die. Let me first prepare the ground and soil on the hill, and instead of stones put loose earth on it, and then the choice plants.

The bishop thus concluded his narrative. Philemon replied: I understand you, and put the Ethiopian into the school.

Soon afterwards there came another, desiring to become a christian, a Greek, who feared God, and was deeply troubled in spirit about his sins.

Then said Philemon to the bishop: I will place him in school. But Ignatius answered: Bring him here, that I may baptize him. Philemon was amazed, and asked: Why then did you forbid the Ethiopian slave? Have you forgotten your own metaphorical narrative?

To this the pious bishop replied: Do you in this case then see a dead stone, and do you not perceive budding life! My friend, put it into a good soil, and water it, and it will live.

110. THE SCHOOL.

The holy bishop Clement one day visited the school of the Christian church at Rome. He found the teacher of the children sitting on the ground, and the children laughing and sporting around him; some pulling his beard, and the hair of his head, others tore his clothes, but all were screaming and roaring, so as to fill the school with confusion and boisterous tumult.

But when the bishop entered, there was great stillness, and Clement called the teacher on one side, and looking earnestly on him, reproved such misconduct with the children, saying: Is this becoming a teacher of the congregation of the Lord?

Papias,—for that was the teacher's name—replied: Did not the Lord suffer the children to come to him, and forbade them not, but took them into his arms. . . . . .

Yes, said the holy Clement, but he laid his hands on them, and pressed them to his bosom and his lips, and spake of the kingdom of God.

111. THE ROUGH DIAMOND.

A rough diamond lay in the sand with many common stones. A child took up a number of them to play with, and brought them home, together with the diamond, not knowing, however, what he had. The father was looking at his boy's play, and observed the diamond, and said to his son: Give me this stone! The boy did so smiling, and thinking: What does father mean to do with the stone?

He took and ground it skilfully to smooth surfaces and regular corners, until the polished diamond shone brilliantly.

Then he brought it to his son, and said: See, here is the stone you gave me. The child was astonished at the beauty and brilliant splendour of the stone, and exclaimed: My father, how did you do this?

The father said: I knew the virtue and hidden powers of the stone, so I freed it from the rough covering that surrounded it. Now it shines with its natural brilliancy.

When at length the child had become a youth, the father gave him the precious stone as an emblem of the value and dignity of life.

112. ADAM AND THE SERAPH.

One evening Adam reclined on a hillock under a tree in the garden of Eden, and his eyes were directed towards heaven. A seraph came up and

said to him: Why dost thou look up so wistfully towards heaven? What ails thee, Adam? What could ail me here, answered the father of the human race, in these abodes of peace? But mine eye contemplates the stars that twinkle there above. Then I wished for the wings of an eagle to soar aloft, that I might, near at hand, look upon those beaming forms.

Those wings thou hast, replied the seraph, and touched Adam, that he sank into a slumber, and dreamed. And in this dream, it seemed to the dreamer as if he soared up to heaven.

After he awoke, he looked round with amazement, to find himself under the tree on the hillock. The seraph, however, stood before him, and asked: Of what art thou thinking, Adam? Adam answered and said: Behold, I was above, on the clouds of heaven, and moved amid the stars, and I floated about Orion, the seven stars, and Pleiades; glittering worlds, immense and glorious as the sun, rushed by, before me. The milky way which thou seest there on high, is a sea of light, full of beaming worlds, and above this sea of light, is another, and still another. And on these bright worlds, dwell beings like myself, who pray to the Lord, and praise his name.... Seraph, hast thou led me thither?

This tree, answered the seraph, has overshadowed thee, and on this mound has thy body rested. But, lo, Adam, there dwells a seraph within thee, that has power to soar among those ranges of worlds,

and the higher he ascends, the more devoutly does he adore Jehovah. Son of the dust, honour and guard this seraph, that lust do not lame his wing, and chain him down to earth.

The seraph thus spake, and vanished out of sight.

113. THE BEAUTIFUL.

Early one morning in May, a father took his son, Theodore, into a rich man's garden, which he had never before seen. The garden was out of town some distance, and was very beautifully ornamented with various shrubbery and plants, flower-beds and fruit-trees, leafy walks and shady groves. Through the garden there meandered a clear rivulet, which burst out from a rock above, and formed a round lake below, where was a mill in operation in a cool ravine. In the most lovely spots of the garden were seats of turf and moss, and green arbors.

Theodore could not sufficiently admire all the beauties, as he walked by the side of his father, generally in silence, but sometimes saying: Oh, father, how beautiful and splendid this garden is!

His father then told him how all this, twelve years before, was a waste spot, and marshy ground; and how the owner of the estate had planted and laid it all out so beautifully. The boy was still more astonished, and praised the skilful man who had transformed and arranged it all so delightfully.

When they had now seen a great deal, and were

weary with walking, the father led the boy through the shrubbery to the waterfall of the brook, and they lay down on the side of a hill. Here they heard the rushing of the water, which fell foaming over the steps of the rock; and all around them in the bushes sat nightingales, singing in unison with the music of the brook. And Theodore thought then that he had never before heard nightingales sing so beautifully.

Whilst they lay thus and listened, they heard the voices of children, and of a man. They were the children of the miller, a boy and a girl, leading their grandfather, a blind old man, between them, telling him all about the blooming shrubs and trees along their path, and entertaining the old man with tender words and interesting conversation.

They took the old father and seated him in an arbor amidst singing nightingales, and there kissed him, and then sprang into the garden to bring him flowers and fruit.

The old man smiled, and when left alone, took off his hat and prayed with a glad countenance. Then the heart of Theodore and of his father overflowed, and they too prayed and offered thanks with the old man. So much was Theodore affected that he wept.

The children soon appeared, shouting as they approached; and they gave to their blind grandfather fragrant flowers and ripe fruit. And Theodore said

to his father, after they returned home; Oh, how delightful, how beautiful this morning was!

114. THE INVISIBLE PRINCE.

In a far eastern land, there dwelt a small nation, much given to superstition and idolatry. As they were now quarrelling about the supremacy, they consented to choose a foreigner. So they took a man of the house of Israel, by name Abia, and made him their king. This was about the time when Salmanasar had subdued the Israelites, and scattered them over all the world.

Abia, however, a pious man, was much troubled that he was ruling over an idolatrous people; and as they would not cease from their idolatries, he was grieved at heart. But the spirit of the Lord said unto him: Thinkest thou that I could not destroy their idols; yet I permit my sun to shine upon them. Do thou likewise!

So Abia was content, and reigned wisely. For he thought, perhaps my son will succeed. When the hour of his death arrived, he proclaimed to the people: Behold, I die, and my son will be your king. You have not yet seen his face; but you will know his reign by its fruits. Follow him, he will lead you wisely.

This the people promised, and, when Abia was dead, obeyed the unknown sovereign, as a great blessing. For his rule was that of a father, and the

orders that proceeded from his gates, were pure wisdom, righteousness, and goodness. The favour of the unknown ruler was diffused, like the beams of the sun, over all the inhabitants of the land, and wherever there was need, there the aid of the king was at hand. All wondered at it, and said among themselves: We see him not; how can he see us? For he lived in the retirement of his court, and no one knew his face.

The people longed the more to see and to bless him, and they said: We have our gods ever before our eyes, and can see and touch them; why should we not then look on the countenance of the king, who is to us more than a father! Some made images of him, according to their own imaginations; and every one said of his own: This is he! He must resemble this!

At length their desire became very great, and the body of the people assembled at the gates of the court, and with one accord, begged that their lord the king would let them see his face.

Then the lofty portals opened, and the king stepped forth, in simple garb, and said to the people: Behold your king!

The people shouted before him, and hailed him; but when they beheld his countenance, they were all surprised, and exclaimed: We know thy face!—for he had often walked among them, but they had not known him, and took him for a servant or a stranger.

Then the king beckoned; and as soon as silence prevailed, opened his mouth, and spake: You now see me, that I am a man like yourselves. Do you suppose, then, that these hands and feet, these eyes and lips, which are mortal and corruptible, have ruled over you? No! That which has led, blessed, and delighted you, through me, you see not nor behold—nor do I myself see it; for can you see wisdom, justice, and goodness? They were near you, as I walked unknown in the midst of you. You now see me, but them you see not. Now judge yourselves what is in my earthly nature. Can the visible produce the invisible! What is in me, also, is not mine, but his who has appointed me your king.

Thus spake the excellent king; and the people returned to their homes thankful and blessing. And they brake the images and likenesses of him which they had made.

Soon, also, they broke their idols, and believed in the Invisible.

115. PAUL AND LUKE.

Paul, the apostle of the Lord to the Gentiles, walked, with his disciple, Luke, through the streets of Athens, the chief city of Greece. And Paul was very serious and sad; for his soul was grieved to see so many idolatrous temples and altars amongst this

wise and inventive people, and so many signs of their superstition.

He passed on in silence, troubled in spirit; and Luke, knowing his thoughts, did not interrupt him. They soon came to a different altar; and the apostle's countenance became serene and joyful.

This surprised Luke, and he asked: What in this idol-altar gratifies you? The apostle replied: Read the inscription! And Luke read: "To the Unknown God!"

Then Paul spake: Thou seest, Luke, that amid error and darkness truth is not entirely lost. It lies in concealment and sleeps, and awaits the ray of light that awakes it.

Thereupon they went to the market-place; and Paul preached to the Athenians of the Unknown. Many believed, but others said: We will hear thee farther.

116. THE IDIOTIC CHILD.

Abraham sat one day in the grove of Mamre, sorrowful and leaning his head upon his hand. His son, Isaac, stepped up to him, and said: My father, why are you sad? What ails you? Abraham answered: My soul is troubled about the people of Canaan, that they do not acknowledge the Lord, but walk in their own ways, in darkness and foolish error.

Oh, answered the son, is that all! How can this

be such a trouble to you: they are their own ways. The patriarch then arose from his seat, and said: Come, follow me! And he took the youth into a hut, and said to him: See there!

In this dwelling there was a child that was an idiot; and his mother sat weeping beside him. Abraham asked: Why do you weep? The mother replied: Alas! this, my son, eats and drinks, and we watch over him; but he knows neither his father nor mother. So life to him is lost, and the springs of joy are sealed up.

Thus spake the weeping mother. And Abraham went and proclaimed the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

117. MAN AND THE SUN.

Shem, son of Noah, stood one day looking thoughtfully up at the sun. Noah, his father, stepped up and asked him what he beheld. Shem answered: I was contemplating that celestial being which the Lord has clothed with so wonderful brightness. On the height of heaven he pursues his course; and underneath him are the storms and floods of water. Then I thought: Had Jehovah only made man so!

Thereupon Noah said: My son, strive not after things which are not given thee; thou mightest, were they granted thee, but sink deeper and lose the better. How could that possibly be, my father,

answered the youth; would it not be an exaltation to be like the sun?

Noah answered, and said: You would then be larger than Mount Ararat—yes! larger than the earth on which we dwell. But do you think you would gain anything by it? You would forever walk the same path, and could turn neither to the right nor to the left by your own will. You now look up to the sun, but it cannot look down upon you; much less can it look upwards and know and worship Him who made it. It wanders alone, too, in the heavens, without love or hope. A day, too, will come, when it will be extinguished like a lamp; and its rising in the horizon be looked for in vain. You, however, are destined to an eternal existence, where you will stand higher than the sun. Would you exchange your nature and existence for its?

No, my father, answered the youth, I am ashamed of the sinful wish.

118. NIGHT AND MORNING.

Not long after midnight, Allmed, the wise teacher, called his scholar, Sadi, from his bed, and said: Get up! we will go over the fields to your father's house before the heat of the day. Sadi sprang cheerfully out of bed, took his robes, and followed the teacher of his youth. Oh, what a night! said the youth, as they stepped out into the open air: Allmed replied: We shall see its glory on Tabor. Then

they went on expeditiously to the mountain and reached its summit, where they lay down.

There was a solemn stillness; the face of the sky was perfectly clear, as a beautiful sapphire; the atars stood out as a mighty host, and glittered; and the sea reflected the glory from afar. Sadi rose from his seat, and surveyed the heavens and the sea in silent wonder; and Allmed occasionally opened his mouth and uttered his thoughts in passages of holy writ: "Lift up thine eyes and see who hath made all these things." "He numbereth the stars, and calleth them all by name." "Our Lord is great, and of great power; and he is incomprehensible in his rule." "Thou alone art Jehovah! thou hast made the heavens, even the heaven of heavens; the earth, and all that is upon it; the sea, and all that therein is. Thou makest every living thing, and the hosts of heaven worship thee." "Lord, how great and manifold are thy works." "What is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou so regardest him." All nations are as nothing before thee."

Thus spake the teacher in the silence of night; Sadi trembled, and covered his head; for fear had come over him.

Then Allmed exclaimed: Behold, the day begins! and lo, it was the time of the dawn; and Aurora spread her wings out to the ends of the earth. The sea along its shores reflected the rosy blush of morning, and the trees and mountains also; and the clouds

in the eastern heavens were clad in purple and ruby-red. Then the sun arose, the mountains smoked, and the sea glowed like liquid gold; and now the voices of the birds made the air vocal with their songs; the beasts of the field bestirred themselves, and men walked abroad in the fields, the gardens, and the vineyards. The morning sun beamed around the countenances of Sadi and his teacher; and Sadi looked with joy into the face of Allmed, who opened his lips, and said: Behold, Sadi, as great as his Almightiness, so great also is his love. Then fell Sadi upon his teacher's neck and wept for joy. And Allmed stretched out his arms over him, and blessed the youth.

Then they took up their staves and walked to Sadi's home, and Sadi was good-natured and quiet the whole day, so that his parents rejoiced over their son, and said to each other: How shall we repay Allmed what he has taught our son?

They, however, knew not what had happened on the mount.

119. NEHEMIAS AND ELIMAH,

OR THE LIVING GOD.

At the time of the captivity of the people of Judah lived Nehemias, son of Hachalia, at the court of the king of Persia at Shushan, the capital of the country. Nehemias talked one day with Elimah, the king's steward, about the service of God and the

law of Israel. Elimah, however, worshipped the sun, after the manner of the Persians.

And Elimah said to Nehemias: Our mode of worship is better than yours, for we see our God with our eyes.

But Nehemias answered and said: Do you think the body better than the soul, and the sceptre and sword of the king better than his favour and righteousness?—Elimah was silent.

At another time Elimah conversed with Nehemias, and said: Our God is near to us; who can comprehend yours?—To this Nehemias replied; Do you touch and handle your God with your hands?

Then said Elimah: What fool will so far mistake his powers, and desire to reach to heaven with his arms!

But Nehemias answered and said: Wherein you do not misrate yourselves in regard to your visible object of worship, shall we not therein be modest in respect to the invisible, lofty one, who made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is?—Elimah answered not.

Once again Elimah said to Nehemias: Who can think, that your God, as you say, cares for every individual, and remembers every living thing?

Nehemiah answered and said: Does not your sun-god, that you worship, send down his beams out of the lofty distance, upon each seed-corn, that it may sprout upon every stem, that it may be green, and

every ear, that it may ripen? Elimah was confounded. But Nehemias proceeded: Elimah, my brother, raise thy heart from the creature to the creator, from the light to the source of light. Then thou wilt recognise the sun as a wonder-work of his hand and creation of his omnipotence, and, worshipping him in humility, feel thyself greater than it. For thou art a child of the living God, and canst call him father. That it cannot do.

Then Elimah was dumb, and pondered his ways, and became a believer.

After some time, Nehemias asked Elimah, his friend: How now appears the sun, that you worshipped? Elimah answered: Since I became acquainted with Him himself, it seems to me a spring on its course.

120. THE PARSEE, THE JEW, AND THE CHRISTIAN.

A Jew stepped into a Parsee temple and saw there the holy fire. He spake to the priest: What, do you worship the fire? Not the fire, replied the priest, it is to us an emblem of the sun and of its genial light. Then asked the Jew: Do you then worship the sun as your God? Do you not know, that this also is a creation of the Almighty! That we know, answered the priest; but man being dependent on his senses, needs sensible signs in order to apprehend the Most High. And is not the sun

the type of the invisible, incomprehensible source of light that embraces and blesses all.

Then the Israelite answered: Do your people then distinguish the type from the prototype? Already they call the sun their God, and even sinking from this again to a lower image, bow before the earthly flame. You charm his external, and dazzle his internal eye; and whilst you hold up before him the earthly light, you withdraw from him the heavenly. You should not make unto thee any image, nor any likeness at all.

How then, asked the Parsee, do you designate the highest nature?

The Jew replied: We call it Jehovah Adonai, that is, the Lord, who is, who was, and who will be!

Your word is great and glorious, said the Parsee, but it is fearful.

A christian then stepped up and said: We call him father. The Gentile and the Jew looked on each other with amazement, and said: That is the nearest and the highest! But who gives you the courage thus to address the Eternal?

Who else, said the christian, but He, the Father himself. He then disclosed to both the mystery of the Father's offering of his Son, and of the doctrine of the atonement.

And when they understood it, they believed, and lifted up their eyes joyfully towards heaven, and said, full of fervour and spirit, Father! dear Father!

And now all three shook hands and called themselves brothers.

121. THE BIRTH-DAY PRESENT.

When the time was now fulfilled, and the birth-day of the father had arrived, the youngest three children secretly gathered flowers, the most beautiful they could find, and wove them, without their father's knowledge, into a beautiful wreath. Nor could they close their eyes the whole night.

When the day dawned, all three went into their father's chamber, with bare feet, lest he should hear, and unitedly bore the crown of flowers, and laid it very softly on their father's bed, so that he should not notice it. The father, however, observed them, although he pretended to be asleep.

After he arose in the morning, he came out with the beautiful wreath, and said: Where are the little angels who crowned me in the night while I slept! The children came and hung around him, and kissed him, and were overjoyed.

Then there came a messenger, who brought a nice round cask, hooped, which contained choice wine from Hocheim, to cheer the heart of the father. He was rejoiced to find that his eldest son had sent it, and the children danced around the father and the cask.

The father then stepped up to the table and found a fine large sheet, containing a beautiful, tender hymn

from the second son, who had returned from abroad. On reading it, the father smiled, and his tears fell on the paper.

The three little ones looked on their father, and said: Dear father, is it not so? we can give nothing now, we cannot compose any thing, we are too small yet! Then the father took all three, the little girl, and the two boys, and pressed them to his heart, saying: O, do not suppose that your present is less in my eyes. Strike your little hearts as well as the rest, my paternal heart is for you all.

122. THE ANGRY FATHER.

One day Sadi was reading in the Holy Scriptures, when he suddenly closed the book and looked sober and sullen.

Allmed observed it, and asked the youth: What is the matter? why is thy countenance fallen? Sadi answered: The Scriptures speak of an angry God, and elsewhere call him Love. That seems to me hard and contradictory.

The teacher said calmly: Must they not speak to men in human language? But are you not offended then, when they attribute to the Most High, mortal members. . . .

Oh no, replied the youth: That is figurative, innocent language—but anger. . . .

Allmed interrupted him, and said: I will relate to you an occurrence. In Alexandria there lived

two fathers, wealthy merchants, who had two sons of the same age. These they sent to Ephesus to learn their business. Both were well instructed in the faith of their parents.

After they had lived a long time in Ephesus, they became dazzled by the splendour and joyousness of the city, departed from the faith of their fathers, and became worshippers in the temple of Diana.

A friend in Ephesus informed Cleon, one of the fathers in Alexandria, of this fact. When Cleon read the letter, he was much troubled at heart, and grieved in spirit over the boys. He then went to the other father, and told him of the apostacy from the truth, and of his distress. The other laughed, and said: If my son's business thrives the better for it, I can be at ease about the rest.

Then Cleon went away, still more vexed.

Thereupon said Allmed to the youth: Which of the two fathers seems to you the wiser and the more tender? Sadi answered: He who was angry. And which, asked the teacher, was the most affectionate father? The youth replied again: He who was displeased.

And was Cleon angry with his child? asked Allmed. And Sadi answered: Not with his child, but on account of the departure from the truth, and the ruin of his son.

What then seems to you the occasion of such dis-

pleasure at the wickedness? asked the teacher; and the youth said: Holy love of the truth.

Then see, my son, said the old man, if you only can contemplate the Deity in a godly manner, the human expressions in reference to him will no longer trouble you.

Sadi sat thinking awhile, then looked on his teacher, who said to him: You appear still not to be satisfied, and a question hovers on your lips. The youth replied: Yes, my father, it seems to me nevertheless audacious to apply such human expressions to the Highest and Purest.

It is undoubtedly the language of man, said Allmed, and I admire the reverence of your heart. But see, my Sadi, if now the apostate son, convinced of his fall, in some hour of repentance, shall have thought of his godly father, and of the season of his own innocence—what, do you suppose, he will then have discovered in the heart of his father, although not angry.

Oh, said the youth, I understand you, my father: To him it must appear only as an angry heart; and the Holy Scriptures speak to a fallen race.

123. THE LILY,

OR THE TEACHING OF THE LORD.

Gotthold, the son of pious parents, stood one day before a lily, with folded hands, and in musing mood, and his countenance was lighted up with

quiet devotion and the inward stillness of his soul. His father approached and asked: What are you thinking about, my son?

Gotthold replied: I was thinking of the words the Saviour uttered about the flower, when he exalted it above the glory of Solomon.

And why, asked the father, does this seem to you so peculiar; your feelings seem moved. O, my father, answered the boy, it affects me to think that he, the Lofty One, humbled himself to praise a perishable flower and its earthly beauty.

The father then said: O well, my son, I admire and sympathise with your feeling. He stooped to this earthly flower in order to glorify all things earthly, and to elevate man to celestial bloom.

In the bright and fragrant cup also of the fading flower, he taught them to acknowledge the source and Father of all light and life; he made, by his words, the silent flower a comforter of the troubled soul, and at the same time praised its simple beauty. You see then, the flower becomes an earthly emblem of his heavenly wisdom, truth, goodness, and beauty, united in an eternal bond. And is it transitory?—added the father after a pause—do you not behold the lily in the same beauty, in which the Lord saw it?

124. THE MAGNETIC NEEDLE.

A company of learned men built a ship and con-

cluded to make a voyage, in order to test the wonderful nature and action of the magnetic needle. When the ship was finished, they went abroad with a great many books, and various instruments, and set the compass-needle in the midst, while they watched and scrutinized it. So they sailed about, and observed the needle, and each had his own thoughts about the hidden power that moved the needle.

Some called this secret power a stream, others an atmosphere, others again a spirit; some affirmed that it moved from south to north, others from north to south. There arose a great controversy on this subject among the scientific, and they beat about on the sea, quarrelling with one another.

Suddenly, however, there came a tremendous jolt, with loud cracking; for the ship had struck the breakers and burst asunder, so that the water rushed in furiously. The learned were all affrighted and thrown into consternation; they left the needle, sprang out of the vessel, and saved themselves on the rocks. The ship, however, sank in the waves.

As they now sat dripping with salt water on the bare rocks, they sagely and unanimously concluded that the needle was not yet to be trusted.

125. THE SEED-CORN.

A father, with his three sons, dwelt on a large island, where he took care of them and their children,

so that they never suffered want and poverty. When, however, the father's end drew near, he summoned his sons around him, and said: I must now leave you, the hour of my departure has come, and you must henceforth provide for yourselves, as I have hitherto done. Neither can you any longer dwell together, but must separate and go east, west, and north. Take, however, these seeds which I give you, and preserve them carefully. And when I shall be no longer with you, each of you take a portion of land, and plough it, so as to loosen the soil for the reception of the sunshine and rain. After having done this, sow the seed, and cover it with earth; so you will obtain abundant fruit of your toil for the nutriment and joy of your life. Have your fences in good order, too, that the wild beasts do not break in and destroy every thing.

After the father had thus spoken, he died, and they buried him.

Thereupon the sons made a division, and went out, as their father had indicated, and took the seed with them. When they had now arrived, each at his own place, the eldest took the seeds his father gave him, and said to himself: Of what use will it be to give such pain to myself and to the earth, as to toil in rending its bosom. The sun will, notwithstanding, warm it, and the rain moisten it, so that it will bring forth its fruit. Then he scattered the seed over the hard ground. But it did

not spring up, nor produce fruit. The eldest despised and neglected the gift of his father.

The second son, who went towards the west, on arriving at his destination, saw that the country was very pleasant, and thought within himself: Why should I do myself such an evil, in ploughing up the bosom of the earth, so long as the land offers me its fruit abundantly. And he put the seed aside, and let it lie. Afterwards, when he had consumed the fruits of the land, he sowed the seeds of his father. But it did not spring up, for a worm had eaten out the germ, so that he sowed nothing but hulls. He contemned the gift of his father, and forgot it.

The youngest, however, did as his father had bidden, tried the best field, manured it, and dug it up with all care, then put a hedge around it and sowed the seed in the soil. The seed sprouted and grew, and brought forth fruit sixty and a hundred fold. He did the same the next year; and his farm became continually larger, as also his crops, so that he and his children and grandchildren had a superabundance.

Some years after, when the oldest brothers had become poor and needy, and received supplies from the younger brother, they visited him, and saw his farm covered over with rich ears and sheaves, and heard the shouts of the reapers in the fields; for it was the time of harvest.

They were astonished, and said to each other:

We have done wrong to contemn the gift of our father.

126. THE SHEPHERD'S MAID OF BETHLEHEM,

OR HEAVENLY TRUTH.

On the mountain at Bethlehem dwelt a man, named Samma, who possessed a large estate and numerous herds, and had but one only daughter, named Sulamit. She was very beautiful in person, yet much more beautiful in spirit, and rich in every virtue and grace; and all the shepherds of the mountains wished to marry her, and courted the girl. But most of them thought only of the rich estate that she would inherit, and contended for Sulamit with incessant quarrelling.

Among them was also Gideon, son of Ephraim, a friend of Samma, who, however, had died early. But Samma respected the youth above all others, because he faithfully cherished his mother, and provided for her. Gideon strove not with the shepherds, but lived quiet and alone, and tended his flocks.

One of the shepherds, one day, said to Gideon: Why do you not strive after Sulamit with us, and pay your addresses to her, the loveliest of the daughters of Judah?

Gideon answered, and said: Why should I quarrel

about her; Sulamit is already mine, and her father has betrothed her to me.

Then the shepherds hated and envied Gideon. But he went on his way quiet and joyful, and married Sulamit; and they were blessed with sons and daughters.

127. WINFRIED, OR THE TEACHER'S OFFICE.

When Winfried, the faithful teacher, moved by the spirit, was about to leave his kindred to go and preach the gospel to the Germans, his friends dissuaded him, saying: Remain at home in your own land, where you may do good enough, and contend with wickedness as much as you please. Those people, too, will refuse your good offices, and put you to death.

Winfried answered, and said: Hear a dream which I have had, and then judge. I dreamed that I was in a country desolated by war some years before, and converted into a wilderness. I saw all around me only ruins of former dwellings, and every thing seemed withered and dead. As I walked on in sadness, I came upon a little family of children on the mountains, naked and destitute, who fed on the roots they dug out of the earth, and some on the raw bones of animals they caught. Then I was distressed about the children in their desolate situation, and I called to them and asked: Where is your home, and your father and mother? The children

cried with wild shrieks: War has murdered them! War has murdered them! and ran away and vanished out of sight. I, however, was deeply affected with sorrow and grief, and turned my face again towards home. But lo, I heard behind me a scornful laugh, and an earnest voice, saying: Thou hast on the earth much goods, houses and barns! Come, thou rich man, eat, drink, and be merry! Then the spirit testified to me; and I turned about and cried: As truly as the Lord liveth, and my soul liveth, I will be a father of the orphans! And I went forth to take them to myself. Then I heard a soft breeze and awoke.

When he had related this, his kindred said: That is a dream! Are you then a rich man?

Winfried, however, answered them, and said: Gold and silver I have not; but am I not rich in the possession of knowledge, courage, and faith? And why is my attention directed to the destitute people, so that I am more concerned about them than all things else. I will bring them to the Father.

They were confounded at his words, and Winfried, the man of God, set out for Germany, and destroyed their idols with the highplaces and oaks, although they resisted him, and taught them the word of faith, of hope, and love. And they received it, became blest, and said: Well is he called *Winfried*, for he has gained us peace. Others said: He has done a good work, and called him *Boniface*.

128. THE FARMER AND HIS SON.

A farmer possessed an immense estate, many fields, gardens, and meadows, large herds of cattle, and flocks of sheep, together with many men-servants and maid-servants; and the order and wealth of his house were celebrated in all the land, but still more the name and wisdom of the master of the house, who managed so prudently and carefully, that nothing was wanting.

Then it came to pass that the lord of the estate was obliged to go abroad for several months; and he called his son, and said: My son, I am going away; I entrust to your protection the house and estate until I return.

The youth trembled at the thought of such a work, but his father bade him farewell, and departed.

Joses, for that was the young man's name, now undertook the care of the ample estate, at first with fear and apprehension; but he took courage, saying: My father has entrusted it to me, and I must fulfil his wishes.

So Joses went to work in earnest, and his early faults and failings gradually diminished.

After some months, his father returned; and when he examined his estate, fields, and herds, he found the whole, individually and collectively, in good order. The fame of the son, too, was sounded

throughout the land, and men said: As the father, so is the son!

When the father now commended the son for his good stewardship, the youth said: But, my father, if it had not succeeded. . . . The father smiled, and replied: I knew your capabilities, but you did not; so I intended to give you confidence; therefore I required of you the greatest effort. Now, from a youth, you have become a man.

This story a teacher related to his scholars, when they stumbled at the exhortation: Be ye perfect as your father in heaven is perfect. High task is high honour, said the teacher.

129. THE SIN.

Erich, the son of pious and affectionate parents, celebrated his twelfth birth-day on a beautiful autumnal day. His parents had loaded him richly with beautiful presents, and allowed him to invite a company of his young friends.

They played in the spacious garden, within which Erich also had his own little garden of flowers and fruit-trees. Against the wall of the garden were growing some young peach trees which bore their first fruit. The peaches were beginning to ripen, and the rosy cheeks already blushed through the down which covered them. Their beautiful appearance tempted the appetite of the boys.

But Erich said: My father has forbidden to touch

these peaches, they are the first fruit of the trees; besides I have my own little garden with various fruits. All come away! They might entice us.

Then said the boys: What is to hinder us from tasting them? *You* are to-day master of the garden, and no one else. Is it not your birth-day, and are you not a year older? You do not mean to be always a child and go in leading-strings. Only come once into our gardens! There nobody restrains us. Thus spake the boys.

But Erich said: Oh, no! come with me; father has forbidden it. The boys replied: Your father will not see it; how will he find it out? And if he should ask you, do you tell him you know nothing about it.

Fie! answered Erich; then I must lie, and the blush on my cheeks would soon betray me.

Then the eldest said: Erich is right; but listen, I have another way. See, Erich, *we* will pluck them; then you can swear that *you* have not done it. To him Erich and the rest assented; and they took the fruit and divided it among themselves.

As the evening twilight now advanced, the boys went to their homes. But Erich still remained in the garden, for he shunned the presence of his father; and when he heard the door of the house open, he was alarmed, and became terrified in the dusk of evening.

The father himself came out, and when Erich heard his step, he ran in haste to the other side of

the garden, where his own little spot was. His father, however, went to the peach trees, and seeing how they had been robbed, called, Erich! Erich! where are you? When the boy heard his name, he was still more frightened, and his knees trembled.

But the father approached him, and said: Is this your birth-day and my thanks, that you rob my trees? Erich answered: I have not touched your trees, my father. Perhaps one of the boys has done it.

His father then took him into the house and placed Erich in the brightness of the light, and said to him: Will you deceive your father? The boy grew pale, trembled, and confessed to his father with tears and entreaties.

The father, however, said: Henceforth the garden is closed against you; and then left the boy. Erich, however, could not sleep all night; he became horror-stricken in the dark; he heard the beatings of his heart; and when he fell into a slumber, he was alarmed by his dreams. It was the worst night of his life.

The next day Erich seemed pale and sad; and his mother was so distressed about him, that she said to his father: Behold, Erich mourns, and is much troubled; and the closed garden is to him an emblem of his father's closed heart.

The father replied: That is just as I wish him to feel; therefore I have closed the garden.

Oh, said the mother, he begins the new year of his life so sadly.

So that it may become to him a joyful one, replied the father.

After some days the mother again said to the father: Oh, I am afraid Erich may despair of our love.

Not yet, replied the father; his guilty heart will gainsay that. Hitherto he has enjoyed our love, now let him learn to know and regard it, so that he may win it anew.

But, said them other, does it not appear to him in altogether too serious an aspect?

Certainly, said the father, as righteousness and wisdom. But so let him learn, in the consciousness of his guilt, to fear and honour it. Then will it appear to him again in due season, in its original form, and he will again, without fear, call it love. That will he; his sorrow assures me of it.

After some time had passed, Erich came out of his chamber one morning with a quiet, serene countenance. And he had collected all the presents and gifts of his parents in a basket, which he carried and put down before his father and mother.

His father asked: What do you wish, Erich? And the boy replied: I have not been worthy of the gifts and the love of my parents, so I return the gifts which I do not deserve; but my heart bears witness to me, that from this time a new life begins

in me. O, forgive me then, and accept me and all I have received from your love, as an offering.

Then the father embraced the child, and kissed him, and wept over him. And so, also, did the mother.

130. THE HERO.

A terrible war broke out, and the army of the king marched to the distant boundaries of the empire, to besiege the fortresses of the enemy. The son of the king, and heir of the throne, accompanied the army to encourage them by his presence. But his counsellors plotted evil against him, and thought to entice him, through various lusts, that they might rule instead of him.

They consequently said to him: It is not proper for the king's son to expose himself to danger, and take his place in the army as a soldier; he has captains and colonels for that purpose. It is enough that he be at hand when the occasion requires. Thus will he be more highly esteemed.

So they took him into a large city, and prepared for him all manner of sports, and led him astray into an incessant round of dissipation.

But lo, there came intelligence of all this to the ears of an old faithful servant of the royal house; and he arose and betook himself to the king's son. When he found him, he spake freely and boldly to him, and said: Hearken to me! They design to

injure you, and wish to weaken and corrupt the son of my lord, that they may rule after their own desires. Come, know thyself, and flee youthful lusts, which war against the soul. Be a man!

The voice of truth penetrated the heart of the royal youth; and he arose, put on his armor, girded his sword about him, betook himself to the camp, and said to the general: I will henceforth go to battle with you, and be the first in conflict and hardship.

Then the old hero was deeply agitated, and seized the hand of the youth, and said: O, my lord and prince, he who conquers himself is greater than he who conquers cities and fortresses.

131. HAZAEL.

Hazael, son of an eastern king, was educated in the vale of the philosophers, and had now grown up to youth. His father then sent him to Persia, to complete his cultivation, and study the customs and manners of men. Every indulgence was granted to the youth; but Serujah, his old teacher, secretly observed his course and conduct.

When Hazael had arrived in Persia, the amusements of the city, and the excitements of luxurious life enticed him so that he forgot his object, and gave himself up thoughtlessly to pleasures; thus forgetting altogether his royal calling.

As he now walked one day in the pleasure-gar-

dens of Ispahan, Serujah passed by him in the form of a pilgrim, with a staff in his right hand. Hazael, however, recognised Serujah, and said to him: Whence comest thou, and whither art thou going? Serujah answered and said: That I do not know. This astonished the youth, who said: What! you have left home, and set out on a journey, and know not whither you go! Serujah answered: I have forgotten; so I wander about, and whichever of two roads seems to me the broadest and pleasantest, that I choose. And whither will such uncertain wandering lead you? asked the astonished youth. Serujah replied: That I do not know; why should it distress me?

Then Hazael turned to those about him, and said: This man was my teacher in youth and full of wisdom, but lo, he has become a fool, destitute of understanding. Oh, how changed and different he is!

Serujah then went up to the youth and put down his bundle on the ground, and said: You are right, Hazael, my conduct is changed as well as yours. Formerly I was your guide, and you followed in the way which I pointed out to you. Now, however, since I have ceased to be your leader, I have arisen to follow you. Behold, my wandering, in which I lose the way and forget my aim, is yours, and as from me the spirit has departed, so also from you. Which is the greater fool, you or I, and which wanders in the worse error? . . . .

Thus Serujah spake: and Hazael saw his sins, and returned to the way of wisdom, which Serujah had taught him.

132. THE NIGHT-SHADE BERRIES.

A father walked out to a hill with his two children, a boy and a girl, who amused themselves picking strawberries, which grew abundantly along the road and in the meadows.

All at once the father heard a loud shout of joy from the children, and wondered what they might have found. He went to them, and saw both children with a beautiful fruit, like a cherry, in their hands, and they looked on it, with desire to eat it.

But the father took the berries from them, threw them on the ground, and trode upon them before their eyes. Then he tore up the plants out of the earth, and crushed them with the berries, still remaining on them under his feet.

Then the two children grumbled and looked on their father with dissatisfaction. The father, however, was silent, and walked on. At length the children asked: How could you, dear father, so destroy our beautiful fruit, and rob us of our joy? Why did you do that?

My children, replied the father, if you had eaten this fruit, you would have been both dead. It was a night-shade berry, a deadly poisonous plant.

Then the children looked down ashamed, thanked

their father and said: Dear father, why did you not tell us this? then we would not have troubled you by our foolish grumbling.

But the father replied: Just your displeasure and murmuring prevented me. Had I restrained you from plucking the sweet and wholesome strawberries? Now you know what joys I deny you.

133. THE TRAVELLERS TO THE MOUNTAIN.

Three young men, whose parents dwelt in the vale of Sharon, agreed together to ascend Mount Tabor, the most celebrated in the land of Judea, and thence to view the rising of the sun and the beauty of the earth. They travelled through the valley in the heat of the day, and reached an inn at the foot of the mountain by evening. And they said: Here we will rest and gain new strength, that we may before dawn of day ascend to the summit of the mountain.

The two eldest, Dothan and Eli, did so; they eat a bowl of bread and milk and lay down and slept. The youngest, named Joses, said: I will come before long and lie down with you; you need not wait for me. So when the others had gone into their chamber, Joses went into another apartment, where there was the music of cymbals and flutes. There was a company of frivolous young men and maidens, enjoying themselves in sport and dance over full cups. These said to Joses: Come and drink with us

and give your heart up to pleasures. Joses was taken with this, and drank with them, and became so drunk, that he was carried out about midnight and laid on a bed.

When the day dawned, Dothan and Eli awoke and arose; but Joses lay asleep. They shook him, and called him, and roused him; and when he opened his eyes, he said: No, let me alone, I cannot go with you; for I am very sick and tired. So he fell asleep again.

The two others now set off and walked rapidly up to the top of Mount Tabor, and witnessed the dawn and the glory of the morning-red, and of the sun rising, as if out of the sea. And they threw themselves on their faces and prayed; then they embraced each other, and vowed before God to walk in eternal friendship.

When they now came down to the inn, they found Joses with heavy eyes, his head supported on his hands, and sighing over the pains of his body.

The youths, however, began to speak of the glory of God, which they had seen, and their eyes glistened. Then Joses wept and cried bitterly, that, through his own guilt and misdeeds, he had lost the heavenly vision, and vowed never again to give way to the lusts of his heart.

134. THE PILOT.

A ship sailed on the high sea, when suddenly

there arose a terrible storm and tempest, so that all who were on board grew faint-hearted, and gave themselves up to sighing and crying. The pilot, however, held his peace, watched the needle, and steered the vessel as well as he could.

When the passengers saw this they took courage, and said: Will you save us? The pilot answered: How can I promise you that? Am I able to command the storm? Let it suffice you if I discharge my duty. Thereupon some of them began to be distressed again, for the storm was raging. The pilot, however, still held his peace, watched the needle, and guided the vessel amid the storm and waves.

So they were tossed about until the ship was filled with water. Then the pilot rose up and said: I cannot manage the ship, yet I hope to save your lives. Let every one make himself fast to the wreck. Then there was loud murmuring and mournful crying; but the pilot walked in silence, watching the needle, and commanded every sailor to do his duty. He now ran the ship on a bank near the shore, so that the fore part of the vessel was immovably fixed, but the hinder part was broken by the violence of the waves.

Then the pilot directed those who were able to swim, to throw themselves first into the sea, and get to land, the rest, some on planks, some on pieces of the ship. So it happened that they all reached

the land in safety, the pilot last. After this, the whole vessel sank.

When those who were saved saw this, they murmured against the pilot because he had run them on a sand-bank and lost the ship with all its cargo.

The pilot, however, went through the midst of them, paying no attention to their grumblings.

135. THE WOOD-GATHERING.

Two boys, the sons of poor parents, went out into the woods one day in autumn, to gather dry sticks. One, the son of a pious widow, by name Erhard; the other, Matthias, had a severe step-mother, who often treated his father badly also.

When the boys were in the forest, they agreed to go home together again, and then separated to collect dry wood. Erhard gathered diligently, and wherever he saw a decayed limb on a tree, he climbed up and broke it off. In a short time he had collected a heavy bundle and tied it up fast.

Then he ran to the other side of the wood and called to his companion. He answered out of the depth of the forest, and when Erhard ran to him he found him among the nut-bushes, and said to him: Come home now? where is your bundle? But Matthias answered: What! are you ready to go? I have not found any thing yet.

Erhard was surprised, and discovering that Matthias had only been looking after nuts, he said:

Come now, I will help you to collect your sticks, mother is waiting for me; or else we cannot go home together.

Then Matthias drew out a knife, and looked round to see whether any one was in sight. But Erhard asked him: What are you going to do? The other replied: Do you only collect some dry sticks, that I may put outside of the bundle; for the inside I will provide. Thereupon he was about to hew down a young oak with his knife.

Erhard was affrighted, and cried out: God save thee from doing so to the young tree. That would be a shame and a sin. And, when the forest-master finds it out, he will forbid all to gather sticks, and you will be guilty of depriving the poor of wood in the severe winter. God forbid that we do such mischief! Wait a little, I will find some way for you! So he looked round him, and discovered an old oak with many decayed limbs, and climbed up, and threw down the dried branches, to the astonishment of Matthias.

In less than half an hour they had enough of wood, and Erhard made a bundle and carried it to the place where his was, and laid it down, and said to Matthias: Now, take it up on your shoulder. But Matthias said: Let me have the other, for it is less and lighter. Erhard smiled and said: You are larger and stronger than I am; but as you will.

So they took their bundles, and set off. But Matthias panted and complained, and before they

were out of the woods, he begged Erhard to stop and rest, as he was very tired. And whenever he saw a nut-tree, he wished to stop and look for nuts. But Erhard prevented him, saying, I must go to my mother.

When they came to a corner of the road, Matthias became stubborn, threw down the bundle, and cried out: You have made it too heavy, at the same time drawing out some thick sticks and saying: Whoever pleases may take these. But Erhard took them up, put them into his own bundle, and said: I will carry them for you to the edge of town.

Matthias wondered at the goodness and strength of his fellow, and looking at him, said: Who taught you all this, and what gives you such strength? Erhard answered: *The love of my mother.* But Matthias sighed and groaned.

136. JONATHAN,

OR THE EXCELLENT YOUNG MAN.

In the time of Saul, king of Israel, lived the prophets of the Lord, Nathan and Gad, who were both very much distressed about Saul and the evil spirit of disquietude which had come over him. But with pleasure did these men of God look upon Jonathan, the king's son. For they thought that in him dwelt the spirit of love, and that in his time he would comfort his people.

Therefore they observed the youth, and privately studied his disposition, but above all regarded his love and friendship for David, the son of Jesse. For love, they thought, is the blossom of man. Therefore, by it, we shall know the heart and character of the youth.

Whenever these young men walked together and enjoyed themselves in their youth, or inclined their hearts to music and wisdom, the men of God were near, without their knowing it.

Behold, the king at length became wroth against David, and condemned him, and swore his death. And David was obliged to flee, and fled to Rama. Then said the prophets: Will Jonathan remain faithful and hold to him in this time of peril? And they followed Jonathan when he went out to David. And when Jonathan saw David afar off, he ran to him, and threw his arms around his neck, and they wept together, and Jonathan comforted the soul of his friend David.

The prophets rejoiced in the scene, and said to each other: Jonathan is a good young man; he has not forsaken his friend in adversity, but strengthened the bond of his heart. His tears bear witness to that.

Some time after this, Gad said to Nathan: Lo, now comes the severest test for our Jonathan. Samuel has anointed David king, and to be the chief in Israel.

Nathan looked sober and distressed in spirit, and

said: I would gladly have this trial omitted; but the spirit of the Lord commands to prove him.

And the men of God accompanied Jonathan on his way to David in the wilderness of Siph. And when they were now in the wilderness, near to the cave on Mount Hachilah, the prophet Gad said to Jonathan, the son of king Saul: Behold, Samuel has anointed David king of Israel. As soon as Jonathan heard it, he sprang up, fell on David's neck, wept for joy, and exclaimed: Thou wilt live and be king over Israel.

When the men witnessed this, they were overjoyed, and Nathan said: These tears of joy are more precious still than others. To rejoice with them that do rejoice, is better than to weep with them that weep.

And the prophets blessed Jonathan. But it was not known to them that Jonathan should fall by the side of his father on Mount Gilboa.

137. THE ORACLE.

Strephon, a distinguished Grecian youth, one day said to his teacher: I should like to go to Delphi, to have my future fortune predicted. As it seems to me, I would then regulate my life better; and more certainly choose the way of wisdom. When it is your pleasure, answered the teacher, I will accompany you.

They set out and arrived at Delphi. With pecu-

liar feelings of reverence the youth walked over the awful region, in the vicinity of the holy place. They reached the temple and sat down over against it. Then Strephon read the inscription over the entrance of the temple: "Know thyself."—What mean these words? he asked his teacher.

He replied: They are easily to be understood. Think what you are, and for what purpose you have received life. One must first know himself well, before he can inquire into the counsels of the gods.

What then am I? asked the youth. You are Strephon, replied his teacher, the son of the upright Agathias. But if death should now assail you, as a short time since your brother Callias, would I then say to your soulless body, or to your ashes: My dear Strephon?—Behold, that nature within you, which thinks, and will soon now learn its destiny out of the mouth of the priest—that is yourself.

This invisible nature is intended to guide your entire course, and to mould your life to a pure harmonious whole. By this means you will become like unto the Divinity, and be at peace with yourself. For the man, in whom the spirit controls, is like a well strung lyre, which gives out only delightful tones. The man on the contrary, whom sensual lust and passion control, is a slave, and his carnal appetites lead him into whatever ungodly ways they choose. Whosoever has a lively apprehension of this his destiny, and examines himself as

to how far he has gone on the way towards the mark, or departed from it—*he knows himself.*

The youth was silent. His teacher then said: Come, let us now go into the sanctuary.

But Strephon answered: No, my dear teacher, the inscription is sufficient for me. I am ashamed of my foolish wish, and have enough to do with myself and the present, without troubling myself about my future lot.

Blessed art thou, said the teacher; let it not repent thee of the journey; thou hast reached thine aim, and heard the voice of God. Thou art on the way of wisdom; thy humility, the first fruit of self-knowledge, gives me assurance of that.

138. SELF-EXAMINATION.

A pious father had a degenerate son, who, despising all admonitions, spent his days in the company of wicked fellows, and indulged himself in every carnal lust. So his heart became more and more corrupt, and every virtue was smothered in him. His father mourned in silence over the dissolute manners of the youth.

After some time, the father had a severe attack of disease, and feeling that he should die, sent for his son. When the latter came to the bedside of his father, he said unto him: Fear not, my son, that I am going to chide you for your misconduct. I am dying, and I leave you the heir of my estate;

therefore fulfil the last request that I shall make of you. It is easy to fulfil, if you will cheerfully promise me its fulfilment, and keep your promise.

The son answered, that he would gladly do it, as far as he could by any means.

Then said the dying father: Promise to me, my son, that, for two months, you will go every evening at the close of day into your chamber, and commune with yourself there in solitude one half hour.

The son promised to comply with the request fully, and gave his hand to his father as a pledge.

His father blessed him, and died, and was buried.

The son, however, returned to his companions, and lived as before, in lustful enjoyments.

When the evening now came, he thought of his solemn promise, and the image of his dying father admonished him to keep it. At first it was intolerable to him to be alone; for it seemed to him too quiet and solitary, and fear stole over him; yet he conquered himself because of his pledged word, and thought: Two months will soon pass away.

But behold, he now surveyed his wanderings; his heart condemned him; the fear of the Lord took hold on his spirit; he smote upon his breast and wept, and became another man.

139. THE COWHERD.

A boy tended a cow in a pasture near to a garden; and looking up, he saw a cherry-tree that had some

ripe cherries on it, whose bright-red appearance tempted him to pluck them. So he left the animal and climbed up the tree.

The cow, however, as she did not see the lad, went off and broke into the garden, and eat flowers and plants, as many as she desired, and trampled down the rest.

When the boy saw it, he was very angry, sprang from the tree to the ground, ran thither, seized the cow and beat her and abused her shamefully.

Just then his father, who had seen it all, stepped up to him, and looking earnestly on him, said: Which deserves such chastisement, you, or the cow that does not know what is right or wrong? Have you followed your appetite any less than the animal which you ought to attend? And now you inflict such an unmerciful punishment, and forget your possession of reason, and your own sin.

The boy was ashamed of himself, and blushed before his father.

140. LEBANON.

Simeon, a teacher in Israel, walked before the Lord in holiness of life; so that it was a common saying in the land: As upright and correct as Simeon. But still more did men praise the humility of his spirit; for his soul, like that of a child, was full of innocence and simplicity.

When one day his disciples and friends praised

him highly for his holy walk, and spoke of him as without any fault, Simeon's soul was stirred in him at such conversation, and he said: None is good but One; how, then, do you call me good?

All wondered, and were confounded; but one of them opened his mouth, and said: When a man has spent a long life in the service of God, why should he not take the enjoyment of it, as one who stands on the summit after he has overcome the steep ascent?

Then answered Simeon, and said: I will recount to you a history of my youth. They all hearkened, and the old man related as follows: From my father's house we could see Lebanon at a great distance, and the cedars on its top; and I often heard my father and his friends speak of the height of the mountain, and of the glory of the cedar-forest on its summit.

Such praise I could not understand; and I took a sheet and drew Lebanon and its cedars upon it, then gave it to my father, saying: See, my father, Lebanon, and the cedars on its top. How could you boast so much of it; it appears a hill, and its trees like a bush on the hill. My father, however, smiled in silence, and kept the drawing.

Soon after he said: Take your staff, Simeon, let us go to Lebanon. And we travelled several days—the nearer we approached, the higher the mountain became. And when at last we went out in the night, and arrived at the mountain, and the fog

melted away as the day broke, then I saw its height, and the trees of the Lord on its summit; and I was astonished and affrighted.

But my father drew out the sheet, and said to me: Now measure your greatness and your stature by Lebanon and its cedars. Then I was ashamed of myself, and my cheeks burned.

After these words, the old man arose and said, with a friendly aspect: I have now travelled a journey of some days, and have approached nearer the glory of the Lord.

He paused, and his disciples and friends were silent, and asked Simeon no more about his humility.

141. THE ASTRONOMER AND HIS SON.

An astronomer, a very learned man, had spent the whole night in the observatory, in watching the course of the stars. In the morning he went into the house to salute his wife; he carried a roll under his arm, and his eyes were lighted up with joy and high self-gratulation.

See here, said he, and unfolded the roll filled with a number of figures and signs; see here, the fruit of a blissful, glorious night! What a science, that enables us to mark out beforehand their courses for the innumerable host of heaven, from which they cannot depart either to the right or left, and to

measure the height of the mountains of the moon. And what a feeling to be master of such a science!

As he thus spake, to the great astonishment of his wife, his little son took him by the hand, and interrupted him, crying out: Father! father! He, however, restrained the child, and said: Be still, my son!

The little boy, however, did not cease, but pulled his father, and cried: See here, father! Then the father looked round, and the child pointed to the clock on the wall, and said: I already know all the figures on the face; the hand now stands at seven. At the same time he shook his head very seriously, and looked at his father.

The mother smiled, and the father too, as he folded the roll and said: Verily, the boy is my master.

142. DAVID'S HARP.

One day David, the king of Israel, sat on the hill of Sion; his harp rested before him, and he leaned his head on his harp.

The prophet Gad came to him, and said: Of what are you thinking, my king?

David answered, and said: Of my perpetually changing lot. How many hymns of thanksgiving and rejoicing, but also how many plaintive and mournful odes have I sung with this harp.

Be thou like thy harp! said the prophet.

What do you mean? asked the king.

Behold, answered the man of God, thy sorrow, as thy joy, elicited heavenly tones from thy harp, and animated its strings; so may sorrow and joy form thy heart and life to the heavenly harp.

Then David arose and struck the strings.

143. ASAPH AND HEMAN.

Asaph, one of the holy singers on Sion, sat, towards evening, on the tower of his house, and viewed the sun going down, and his face glowed in its beams. Then Heman, also one of the singers of the temple, stepped up and saluted Asaph, at the same time he said with a smile: Your face shines like that of Moses, the man of God, when he came down from the mount. That becomes you well, Asaph; for your outward shines like your inward man.

Then Asaph looked on his friend, and said: What do you mean, Heman?

And Heman answered, and said: Are you not always serene and joyful, and your countenance is ever the same, bright as the face of heaven, although you suffer so much? O, teach me this art, Asaph.

Then Asaph said: Behold, Heman, I have a friend whom my soul loveth; although he seems afar off, yet is he always near me, and fills my soul. With him I share every thought and every feeling of my heart. I recognise him in the morning-red

and the evening-red; yea, I see him in every flower of the field, and trace his breath in the murmuring of the breeze.

But, said Heman, when tribulation draws near? And Asaph replied: O, Heman, I betake myself to my friend; he is my consolation, and his love exalts my soul. Do you see how the sinking sun yonder gilds the dark indented clouds.

144. ATTALUS AND MENO,

OR THE REGENERATED MAN.

In Antiochia, in Syria, there lived two families of old, in bitter enmity, which the sons inherited from their parents. The two fathers, Attalus and Meno, inflicted on each other every kind of suffering, and their bitterness increased every day.

Meno had a slave, who was a disciple of the Lord, and walked worthily of the gospel, and was faithful in all things, so that Meno prized him highly and set him over his whole household. And in all that Silas—that was the slave's name—did, the Lord was with him, and blessed his master's house for his sake; therefore Meno often conversed with his steward, who became the instrument of his conversion, so that he believed and was baptized into the name of the Lord.

From this time forth Meno became an entirely different man from what he was before, and uttered

not an evil word of Attalus, his enemy, although the latter hated and persecuted him still more, and daily added some new torment.

By such meekness Attalus was yet more embittered, and he hired wicked men to plunder Meno's garden in the night, and to destroy his best trees, which he himself had planted and prized most highly.

Then Meno's friends came and said to him: If you let this go unrevenged, he will do something worse. Meno, however, answered them, and said: The mischief was done at night; he will deny it. It affords me, however, an opportunity of exercising forbearance. The same spirit formerly filled me.

Soon after, his friends brought two of the wicked fellows whom Attalus had hired to destroy the garden, and they said: You can now punish him. But Meno replied: I have forgiven him, and will not harbour enmity in my heart, although I am pained about the trees. At this Meno's friends were angry.

Some time after, a terrible fire broke out in the house of Attalus. Meno hastened thither with all his servants, and saved two children of his enemy out of the flames. Thereupon he went to Attalus, reached him the hand, and said: Oh, let there be no more enmity between me and thee, and between my house and thy house. And Meno offered to aid him in building his new house.

But Attalus went away enraged, and said: The

fire is Meno's work! and many believed his words.

This troubled the man of God exceedingly; and his friends said: Give up the miscreant, and hand him over to Satan! But Meno said: He is a man, and has in his breast a broken human heart. I will not curse him.

After some time, Attalus lost all his property, and became very poor, and was reduced to great straits with his wife and children, and he himself fell sick through poverty and distress.

Then Meno took courage and went to him again, and said: Oh, Attalus, let there be no longer difference between me and thee, but let us give each other the hand before we relent. Let what is mine be also thine! So let us dwell together as brethren.

Attalus, on hearing these words, looked on Meno with a sunken eye and distorted countenance, and turned away. His wife and children, however, wept, and Meno wept with them.

Then Meno's friends derided him, saying: Now has your heart exhausted itself on the wretch; what more will you do for him?

Meno answered: It only remains that I pray for him. And Meno supported Attalus and his family privately, so that they suffered no want.

After these days Attalus took sick and died. When Meno heard of it, he mourned over him, and buried him, and became the comforter of the widow and orphans.

And people said: How can a man do such things? But they knew not the spirit which dwelt in him.

145. SELKA.

Selka, the daughter of the Cheruskan prince, stood alone, in her maiden grace, on a summit of the old Hartz mountains, and looked down thoughtfully on the rocky vale. At a distance the joy of the people and Selka's name resounded; for they celebrated her birth-day.

But Selka herself stood in silent soberness, leaning on an oak, and thought of the solemn vow by which she had recently devoted herself to the Christian covenant, so that her soul was sorrowful, and occupied in deep reflection.

Already had autumn stripped the forest of its leaves, which lay withered over the rocky paths of the vales, whilst the autumnal winds whistled through the clifts and caves.

Selka thus soliloquized: Is not the course of man like the path of this rocky vale, and the glory of man like the flower of the grass? The grass is withered, the flower has fallen.

Just then there was a gentle rustling in the tops of the trees, a stream of light poured down upon the forest from the divided clouds, and Selka heard in the breeze, a voice, which said: The word of the Lord endureth forever.

Then, with a joyful countenance, she looked out

upon the vale, and saw in the lowest part of the rugged, rocky way, two figures, like pilgrims, earthly, yet heavenly, tenderly united in sisterly affection. One, like a youth, walked on rapidly, a cross in her left hand for a staff, the right pointing upwards. The other followed gladly, mounting to the top of the rock. Here a third awaited them, in celestial splendour; she bore in her hands a crown of thorns, on which bloomed the flowers of heaven. These she strewed over the up-struggling pilgrims; and the higher they ascended, the more level became the jutting rocks.

Selka exclaimed: Who are these celestial beings, before whom the dark vale is illuminated, and the rocks are smoothed? She heard in reply: They to whom you have consecrated your heart, Selka!—Faith, Hope, and Love.

Thereupon the vision disappeared, and a thick mist covered the vale. Selka cried out: O, ye celestial ones, leave me a token of your appearance. And behold, the mist then vanished away; and through the midst of the silent vale, from that time on, flowed a young mountain-stream. In its waters the jutting rocks are mingled with the image of the heavens, and their fragments do not check its course.

O, thou image of changeful life, be thy name also mine! said Selka, the prince's daughter, and walked back joyfully to her father's halls.

146. THE HUSBANDRY OF GOD.

Otto, a husbandman, said one day to his neighbour Gotthold: I have for many years past observed your dispositions and your conduct, but one thing seems to me preeminently valuable, and at the same time strange. Although you often experience wonderful changes in your lot, and many various sufferings and troubles have assailed you and your family, yet, notwithstanding all, you remain equally serene and calm in your aspect, words and conduct, in adversity as in prosperity. Tell me how you are able so to do.

Gotthold answered: That I can do in a few words. My own employment and daily labour teach it to me. Behold, I have learned to consider myself and my life as a husbandry.

When Gotthold observed Otto looking as if he did not understand these sayings, he proceeded: Behold, my brother, when trouble comes, I think of the plough and harrow, which tear up the soil, so that weeds may die, and the seed take root; so I inquire after the waste spots within, and the seeds that may grow there. The latter must be destroyed, and the former cultivated, in order that the fruit grow and thrive. Sometimes also I look on my trouble as on a storm, which rolls up, black and threatening, but afterwards brings rain and cools the atmosphere, and I think at the same time, when it has passed over, the sun will shine again. So I

regard myself and my life as a husbandry. And can the field say to the plougher: What doest thou?

Otto replied: You tell me of the fruit instead of the root. Tell me how you attained such a mind and such habits of thought.

Gotthold answered and said: Can the spiritual gift come from any other source than from Him, who sends the rain and sunshine upon our fields, and brings the bread out of the earth!

147. JOB.

In Job's time, there lived a prophet of the Lord in the land of Uz, named Eliud, to whom came Joram, a friend of Job, and said: The ways of the Lord are inscrutable; but wherefore must the righteous suffer so much? Behold, Job has lost all his possessions and goods, his children have been taken from him by death, and those who should console him, torment him with reproaches and bitter language; and besides, he himself is afflicted with disease, and is full of sores from the sole of his foot even to his head.

The hand of the Lord has touched him; answered the prophet.

And yet, pronounced Joram, Job is pious and fears God more than any one in the land. Did he not save the oppressed, when they cried unto him, and the orphan, who had none to help? Was he not a father to the poor, eyes to the blind, and feet

to the lame? Righteousness was his garment; and the eye that saw him, blessed Job and pronounced him happy.

Blessed is the man, whom the Almighty disciplines, answered the prophet.

Is not then the Almighty also the all-merciful? said Joram. Wherefore did he need discipline, who, converting God's gifts so kindly into blessings, maintained a godly walk and conversation before all the world?

That he might also have a conscience void of offence before God, answered the prophet.

What other offering could Job yet bring to him? asked Joram.

The most difficult and most valuable, answered the prophet—*his will.*

148. PATIENCE.

The wise Hillel had discoursed to his disciples about patience. They then said to him: Master, give us now a simile and comparison, as you are wont to do.

Hillel replied: I compare it to the most precious thing the earth produces, the diamond. Covered with sand and rock, it rests in the dark bosom of the earth. Although no ray of light reaches it; yet it shines in imperishable beauty, a child of the heavenly light, which it faithfully preserves in itself. So also in the dark midnight its splendour remains;

but freed from the dark imprisonment, and brought out to the light of day, it forms, in union with gold, the symbol and ornament of glory—ring, sceptre, and crown.

With the greatest earthly ornament, you compare the most hidden and most quiet of the virtues! said the disciples.

Its end, said Hillel, is the coronation of life.

149. HAGAR.

When Hagar had been driven from Abraham's dwelling with her little son Ishmael, she wandered about in the wilderness of Beersheba, and the water-pot which Abraham had given her, was empty. Her child suffered dreadful thirst and cried bitterly, and there was nowhere to be found a spring or a well. Hagar wept and said: Oh, will Jehovah forget the innocent child? Gladly will I die, if he only have compassion on the boy.

Then she laid the child under a tree, and sat over against it, afar off; for she said: I cannot see the lad die, and lifted up her voice and wept.

And God the Lord heard the voice of the lad and opened Hagar's eyes, that she saw a fountain of water. And she went and filled the bottle with water, and gave the child to drink.

And Hagar was comforted, and said: Tears of innocence and love the Lord doth not forget, and

when our need is the greatest, then his aid is the nearest.

150. URI'S FIDELITY.

A heathen king summoned a pious bishop before him, and demanded that he abjure his faith and sacrifice to idols. The bishop, however, said: My lord and king, that I cannot do.

Then the king became very angry, and said: Do you not know that your life is in my power, and that I can put you to death? A nod, and it is done.

That I know, replied the bishop, but allow me first to relate to you a parable, and propose a question for decision. Suppose one of your most faithful servants fell into the power of your enemies, and they sought to render him unfaithful to you, so that he should become a traitor to you. But when your servant remained unshaken in his fidelity, the enemies took him, stripped him of all his clothes, and drove him out naked in disgrace. Say, my king, would you not, when he thus comes to you, give him of your best robes, and reward his disgrace with honour.

Then answered the king and said: Very well! but what does this mean, and where has this been done? The pious bishop replied: Behold, you can strip me of this earthly dress—but I have a Lord, who will clothe me anew. Should I then regard the dress, and for its sake sacrifice my fidelity?

The heathen king replied: I give thee thy life.

151. THE DREAM.

On the rivers of Babylon, at the time of the captivity, there lived a man of Israel, named Uri, with wife and children, and he was honest and upright: but a spirit of discontent and murmuring had come over him. For he quarrelled with God, because he had forsaken his people, and said: Who is the Almighty, that we should serve him, and what profit is it that we call upon him! He also doubted the promise, by which the Lord comforted the captives through the mouth of the prophets, and said: Who will rescue our little company out of the hands of the mighty? It is impossible. Thus Uriah did evil and troubled all who believed in the Lord, and trusted in the salvation of Israel. The Lord, however, had patience with Uriah, according to his great compassion.

One day when Uriah had complained and murmured much over the oppression of the foreigners, the Lord caused a deep sleep to fall upon him, and Uriah dreamed and had a vision.

It seemed to him that he himself, with his wife and children, had escaped from Babylon, and gone home to the mountains near Bethlehem. There he had built a house under the shade of the palm and olive trees, and around him the sheep grazed in the pastures, and the fields rustled with the ears. His heart was full of joy, and he said to his wife and

children: Let us now be joyful and of good cheer, for all distress has an end.

But lo, suddenly the sun was concealed, and it became dark as night; it thundered in the heavens, and the earth shook so that the door-posts trembled, and the house tottered. Uriah quickly caught his wife and children, and took them out into the field. Scarcely were they put down there, when crash went the house, and the earth under their feet heaved, as if it would open its jaws to devour them. Trembling and fearful he left the dangerous place, and fled with wife and children by the glimmer of the lightning to a near rocky hill. But alas! a new misfortune! one of the children was missing, the youngest. The father was about to go off to seek it; when the heaving of the earth commenced again more frightfully than before. The earth gaped open before his eyes, and, O awful! the rock under their feet cracked and struggled over the chasm. His wife and children screamed, and Uriah covered his face, and said: Who can help here and rescue from death!—He awoke, uttering these words. And behold, his wife rested by his side, and the children slumbered around him: he was still in Babylon. The Lord be praised, said he, that it was only a dream.

But the angel of the Lord stood at the foot of his bed, and said: This dream came from the Lord. I touched thy forehead, and the moment of waking has ended thy distress. Uriah, fear not, only believe.

And Uriah humbled himself before the Lord, and said: I have looked for grapes on thorns. And he believed, comforted his people, and strengthened his brethren. And after those days Cyrus issued a decree, that Israel should return to their native land.

152. ADAM AND THE CHERUB.

Adam had cultivated the field and made himself a garden full of trees and plants. The ears of his field waved in the splendour of the evening sun, the trees were full of blossoms and fruit. The father of the human race, with his wife and children, rested on a hill, and viewed the glory of the fields and of the evening sun-down.

Then the Cherub, the watcher of Eden, approached them without his flaming sword, and with friendly aspect. He saluted them, and said: See, the fruit no more grows for you, as before, of itself; in the sweat of your brow you must labour to gain your bread. But after the toil you enjoy the self-acquired fruit, and the full ears look beautiful. Jehovah, the Merciful, has given you means to build yourselves an Eden.

True, said Adam, his goodness is great, even when he chastises. Cheerfully will we toil in the sweat of our brows. But formerly, Jehovah was near and blessed us, and lifted the light of his countenance upon us. What have we to supply the place of that?

Prayer, answered the Cherub. Through labour, he gives you the earthly—through prayer, heavenly gifts.

And Adam, with his wife and children, lifted up his face, and gave thanks, and prayed. Then was his eye bright, and his face shined, and he said: The Lord is good, and his mercy endureth forever.

153. HILLEL AND MAIMON.

OR THE TEMPTING GOD.

The wise Hillel had a disciple named Maimon, of excellent parts and good understanding. But he soon perceived that Maimon trusted too much to his own wisdom, and wholly neglected prayer; for the youth said to himself: Of what use is prayer? Does the Almighty need our words to move him to help and bless us? Then were he a child of man. Can human prayers and sighs change the counsels of the Eternal? Will not the All-benevolent, of himself, provide for us what is good and wholesome? Such were the youth's thoughts.

But Hillel was distressed that Maimon should think himself wiser than the word of God; and he purposed to instruct him.

When Maimon went to him one day, Hillel sat in his garden, under the shade of the palms, musing, with his head leaning on his hand. And Maimon inquired: Master, of what are you thinking?

Then Hillel raised his head and spake in these words: I have a friend, who lives on the profits of his estate, which hitherto he has cultivated carefully, so as to be richly rewarded for his pains. But now he has laid aside the plough and mattock, and intends to leave the farm to itself. So he will become poor and suffer distress.

Has a spirit of despondency taken possession of him, or has he become a fool? asked the youth.

Nothing of either, answered Hillel. He is experienced in divine and human wisdom, and of pious tendencies; but he says: The Lord is almighty, so that he can easily supply me with nutriment, without my bowing down my head to the ground; and he is good, so will he bless my table, and open his gentle hand. And how can that be controverted?

Why, said the youth, is that not tempting the Lord God? Hast thou not told him so, Rabboni?

Hillel smiled, and said: I will tell him. You, my dear Maimon, are the friend of whom I speak.

I? said the young man, in amazement. But the old man answered, and said: Do not you, too, tempt the Lord? Is prayer inferior to labour, and spiritual gifts less than the fruits of the field? And He who calls thee to bow thy head to the earth for the sake of earthly fruit; is he not the same who bids thee raise thy head towards heaven, to receive heavenly blessings? Oh, my son, be humble, believe, and pray!

Thus spake Hillel, and looked up to heaven.

And Maimon went away and prayed, and lived a godly life.

154. THE OLD MAN AND THE YOUTH.

Geron, an old man of eighty years, sat before the door of his farm-house, enjoying a clear morning of autumn. His eye rested one moment on the blue mountains in the distance, on whose summits the mists ascended like the clouds of smoke of the incense-offerings, then on the lively great-grand-children playing around him.

A young man from the city stepped up and entered into conversation with him. When he learned the number of his years from his own lips, he wondered at his strength and his blooming appearance. Then he asked the old man what he had done to enjoy such strength and serenity in the late autumn of life.

Geron replied: My son, it is, like every gift from above, of which we have nothing to boast: yet here below we can do something towards receiving it.

The old man then arose and led the youth into the fruit garden, and shewed him the tall, beautiful trees full of choice fruit, the sight of which delighted his heart.

The old man then said: Do you wonder that I now enjoy the fruit of these trees? Behold, my son, I planted these in my youth. Here you have the secret of my serene old age, rich in fruits.

The youth bowed to the old man; for he understood his words and took them to heart.

155. THE CORN AND THE THISTLE.

A pious farmer, whose hair was silvery white, walked out to the field with his grandson, a youth, in time of harvest. The old man sportively said to the mowers that they were but children to him, who had mastered more than sixty summers.

So one of the reapers reached him a scythe, and the old man took it and mowed a swathe to the ground like a robust young man. The mowers shouted, and whet their scythes to his honour.

The youth, his grandson, said to him: Grandfather, how is it you enjoy so good an old age?

The old man answered, and said: Behold, my son, from my youth up I have trusted in God, in adversity as in prosperity; and by that means have I preserved my courage fresh. I have industriously and faithfully laboured in my calling, and thus gained strength of body, and secured the blessing of God. I lived piously before God, and peacefully with men; and by that means I acquired for myself peace and joy. And with my years, all this has, through the grace of God, been confirmed and deeply rooted in me. Do likewise, my son, and your old age will be like a full sheaf, which the Lord of the harvest gathers into the barn.

To what, then, do you compare a bad old age? asked the youth.

He walked then in silence by the side of the old man, who was discoursing on various topics. He then lifted his staff, and pointing to a thistle on the wayside, said: See here the image of an unfruitful, comfortless old age. It stands alone and unnoticed, its gray head the sport of winds, which scatter its seeds.

156. OLD AGE.

Siegfried, a farmer of ninety years of age, sat in his arm-chair, and saw not the day—for he was blind; yet he was patient, and thought: Soon will the day of my redemption appear. It was now spring.

His grandson, Herman, came out of the field and with joy told the old man of the fruitfulness of the year, and the hopefulness of the crops. The old farmer asked: Have the trees already put forth their leaves? The youth wondered at the question, and replied: Long ago, dear grandpa; yesterday I brought you a twig of blossoms, and a rose too!

Siegfried smiled, and said: Yes my dear son, your yesterday and to-day are no more for me. And your flowers have lost their fragrance for me. Afterwards he asked: Do the nightingales and larks sing? The youth leaned down to him—for

he was deaf—and said: Yes, dear grandpa, shall I not take you into the garden?

The old man smiled, saying: If you can lend me also your hearing; otherwise, of what use will it be to me to be taken out? A little after, he said: Go you out again and bring me little Trude, that some one may be with me in my dark room. The youth replied, with faltering voice: Ah, dearest grandpa, Trude is not at home.

Where is she, then, the dear child? asked Siegfried; and the young man replied with choked voice: She has been buried three months. The old man smiled and wept at the same time, and said: Oh, yes! she is already at home, and it is time I follow her.

When the mother of the house, the old man's daughter, who had come into the chamber, heard this, she fell on the neck of the blind father, and wet his eyes with her tears, and Herman wept too, and took the old man's hand.

Siegfried then raised himself up and said: Children, be not troubled, and let it not distress you, that the world and time to me have vanished, and I have become a child. How should it be otherwise? I stand at the entrance of my father's house, and my weak old age is the infancy of eternity.

157. THE TEACHING OF NATURE.

Among the disciples of Hillel, the wise teacher

of the sons of Israel, there was one named Sabot, who hated all kinds of labour, and gave himself up to idleness and sloth. But Hillel was concerned about the young man, and determined to cure him. So at length he took him out into the valley of Hinnom, near Jerusalem. There was stagnant water full of reptiles and insects, and covered with noxious weeds.

When they had reached the valley, Hillel laid down his staff, and said: Here let us rest on our way. The youth was astonished, and said: What! master, in this hateful marsh! Do you not perceive what a poisonous vapour rises from it?

You are right, my son, replied the teacher; this stagnant pool is like the soul of the idler. Who would wish to tarry any where near him?

Thereupon Hillel took the youth to a waste field, on which grew only thorns and thistles, that choked the grain and wholesome plants. And Hillel leaned upon his staff, and said: This field has a good bottom for bearing every useful and luxurious product; but it has been passed by and neglected, so that now it produces abundance of thistles, and thorns, and poisonous seeds, among which serpents and salamanders nestle. Before, you saw the soul—now, see the life of the idler.

Then was Sabot affected with shame and penitence, and said: Master, why did you bring me into so solitary and gloomy a region? It is the admonitory image of my soul and life. Hillel re-

plied: As you would not credit my words, I have sought to see whether the voice of nature would penetrate thy heart. Sabot pressed his teacher's hand, and said: You have not been unsuccessful. A new life—you shall see it—has sprung up in me.

So it was: Sabot became an active young man. Then Hillel took him into a fruitful vale, on the bank of a clear stream, which, in beautiful meanderings, flowed through flowery meads, amid fruit-trees, and overshadowing shrubbery. See here, said the old man to the delighted youth, the image of thy new, industrious life. Nature, which has admonished thee, may now also reward thee.

Her charms and beauty can only delight him, who, in her life, beholds his own.

158. THE SABBATH.

What need, said Samma the youth, to his teacher, has the Eternal of the service of man? Of what use is the solemnity of the Sabbath day? It was given only for the discipline of uncultivated men. Is not one day as another? The light of the sun illuminates every day alike.

The Rabbi replied: When the children of Israel had returned from their captivity into the land of promise, there lived on the confines of Mesopotamia an Israelite, named Boni, a Levite, and a wise man, together with his wife and children.

The angel of the Lord came to him, in the form

of a messenger of king Artososta, and said: Arise, thou and thy wife and children, and men-servants, and maidens, and go forth to the land of your fathers, that thou mayest counsel thy people, and aid in wisely regulating the city and the land.

Then answered Boni and said: Let my lord the king graciously accept my thanks; but shall I, with wife and children, wander through the desert; nor do I know the way. The messenger, however, said: Up, and learn to trust the king.

Thereupon Boni set out, as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, with his wife and family, early in the morning. But Boni doubted, saying: What will be the end of this? And they passed on through the desert towards the west. When they had now advanced six parasangs, and were weary, behold, there stood a tent on the way, and a man came out of it, and said to Boni and his company: Take rest here! So they rested and refreshed their spirits. And Boni said: It is the goodness of the Lord, that we are here refreshed. But who will now conduct us farther on our way?

Then the man directed him as to the right road and the by-ways, and marked them out on a sheet of parchment for the distance of six parasangs, and then said: Now go in peace!

So Boni and his company proceeded on the way marked out for them, and bore with patience the hardships of the journey; for they remembered the comfort they had received. And when they had

gone over six parasangs, another tent arose to view. Here they again found a servant of the king, who comforted them, and shewed them anew the road, and the wrong ways, which they should avoid.

Thus it was done, all the way on, for eighty days, and when these were fulfilled, Boni and his people arrived at the land of promise. And Boni knew that the angel of the Lord had guided him, and he took care, with Ezra and Nehemiah, that the Sabbath be sanctified, for the people had become degenerate.

Then said the Rabbi: Samma, thou seest that the life of man is a pilgrimage. Six parasangs are six days, but the seventh is a day of rest, when the tabernacle of the Lord stands open for him, that he may think of his wandering, and trust in the Lord.

The careless man observes not the tent, and his way becomes lost in the desert, whilst the wise man finds refreshment and arrives at the land of promise.

159. THE WORD IN THE HEART.

When the patriarch, Abraham, was old and full of days, and the hour of his departure had arrived, he gathered his children and his children's children around him, and blessed them. Then Isaac, his son, and Rebecca, his son's wife, asked him, saying: My father, thou hast been a pilgrim all thy days, and travelled about from Chaldea to Haran, from Haran to Canaan, from Canaan to Egypt, and from Egypt

to Canaan, as a stranger in the land of promise, and through many conflicts and dangers . . . tell us then, father, what has given thee such strength and guided thee in thy pilgrimage?

Then answered Abraham and said: The word of the Lord in my heart.

And what is this word? asked the children.

Abraham said: The word that he spake to me in the plains of Mamre: I am the Almighty, walk before me, and be thou pious? It was to me a strong hold in the day of adversity, a light on the dark way, and a weapon and shield in the time of danger. And now it goes before me at the end of my pilgrimage, and points me to the far off home, which hath good foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Then said his children: I am the Almighty! Oh, who could apprehend it so joyously. . . .

Abraham answered and said: Only he, who has seen the day of the Lord, and has known his love.

When he had uttered these words, he bowed his head on the pillow and gave up the ghost.

160. THE GUIDE.

A traveller had a long and dangerous journey to make over a rugged, rocky mountain, and was not acquainted with the road. He therefore inquired of one who he heard had travelled over the same road. This man described to him very precisely

and accurately the right way, as well as all the by-paths and precipices which he must avoid, and the rocky heights which he must climb. And the better to aid him, he gave him a map, on which every thing was marked out with mathematical precision.

The traveller laid all well to heart, and at every post of his progress, and every by-way, he recalled the directions, and carefully examined the map of his friend. So he went on his way expeditiously; but the father he advanced, the higher did the rocks tower, and the road seemed to lose itself in the desolate, dreary cliffs.

Then his courage failed; he looked up anxiously to the grey, high-jutting rocks, and exclaimed: It is impossible for a mortal to travel over so rugged a way, and to climb this steep ascent;—eagle's wings, and the feet of the chamois are needed for it!

Already he looked back and thought of the way which he had come, when a voice called to him: Take courage, and follow me! When he turned about, to his great joy he beheld before him the form of the man who had described to him the way, whom he saw quietly and securely wending his way among cliffs, and precipices, and rushing mountain-torrents. This gave him confidence, and he followed on after the other with equal spirit and expedition. Before evening they had ascended the mountain, and a lovely valley, where myrtles and pome-

granates bloomed, received them at the end of the journey.

The glad traveller thanked his guide, and said: How shall I repay thee? Thou hast not only directed me into the right way, but hast also given me courage and strength to travel it.

The other replied: O, no! am not I a pilgrim like yourself? And are not you the same you were? You have only learned from me what you are, and of what you are capable.

161. THE SACRED PAINTINGS.

A bold knight, named Hildebrand, had been grievously vexed and injured by Bruno, another knight. He burned with anger in his heart, and could not wait for the day to take bloody revenge on his enemy; so he spent a sleepless night. In the twilight of the morning he girded his sword on his side, and set out on the way to his adversary.

But as it was yet early, he stepped into a chapel close by the way-side, seated himself, and viewed the paintings which hung on the walls, and were dimly lighted by the dawn of the morning. There were three pictures. The first represented the Saviour mocked before Pilate and Herod, and below was written: "When he was reviled, he reviled not again." The second represented the scourging, with the inscription: "When he suffered, he threat-

ened not." The third was the crucifixion, and bore the words: "Father, forgive them!"

When the knight had seen this, he knelt down and prayed. And as he passed out of the church, servants of the knight Bruno met him, and said: We were on our way to see you. Our master desires you; for he is severely ill. So he went with them.

When Hildebrand entered the hall in which the knight lay, Bruno said: O, forgive me my wrong; I have dreadfully injured you! The other replied with kindness: My brother, I have nothing in my heart to forgive thee. And they reached each other the hand, and embraced and comforted each other, and parted in cordial love.

Then the evening-red seemed more beautiful to the home-returning knight than the morning-red.

162. POLYCARP AND HIS ENEMIES.

Polycarp, the disciple of the apostle whom the Lord loved, and like him in love, was bishop of the church of Smyrna at the time of the persecution. The enemies of the truth hated and abused him more than all; he, however, maintained his serenity, and preserved a friendly aspect.

One day his disciples said to the pious bishop: The longer, O father, we are with you, and the more we become acquainted with your character and worth, the more are we amazed at it. You are

like Daniel in the den of lions; on all sides you are beset with enemies whom you have never in the least injured, who would gladly put you to death. But you remain the same; nor have we ever seen on your countenance an expression of wrath, nor heard the least word of displeasure from your lips. How can you do so, O father?

The old man smiled, and said: Do you think, then, children, that the prophet, to whom you liken me, was angry with the lions! The lions that surround me, may have power over my body, but not over my spirit; for this have I given to the Lord. Enemies, however many beset me without—enemies, my children, Polycarp has none.

Thus spake the old man, and his disciples took his words to heart. Soon after, however, they understood much better, when Polycarp stood singing praises in the flames, and his countenance glowed like gold in the furnace.

163. THE BLOSSOM.

How can the All-sufficient need my thanks? said Othniel to his teacher, Simeon.

Not He, replied the sage, but you.

I need my own thanks, that I offer to the Highest? What a contradiction! said the youth.

The old man answered: Does not the Creator command the plant to bloom before it brings forth its fruit?

It is the perfecting of the plant, said the youth.

Gratitude, said the old man, is the blossom of the soul.

After some time, Othniel asked: Why does the plant's blossom so seldom, and not always whilst it is green?

Its verdure, said the sage, is the beginning of the bloom. First it adorns maternal earth, from whose bosom it sprang; then it comes to perfection in the light of heaven.

But the fruit and the seed? inquired the youth.

And Simeon answered, and said: It gives back both to the earth, out of which it drew the sap, its nutriment. So it blooms, sows, and produces fruit unceasingly. Do thou likewise.

164. THE ALTAR OF INCENSE.

How often, asked Othniel, must I offer my thanks to the Host High?

Let thy heart, said Simeon, be as the altar of incense in the sanctuary.

Its holy fire never goes out, answered the youth.

Evening and morning, added the old man, the hand of the priest supplies it with fresh frankincense. So the fragrant cloud rolls up amid the light of day, and thoroughly spices the shades of night.

165. THE REPRESENTATIVE.

A rich young man at Rome had lain sick with a sore disease, but at length was restored to health. When he went out the first time into the garden, he felt as one new born, was full of joy, and praised God with a loud voice. He lifted up his eyes towards heaven, and said: O, thou Allsufficient! could man recompense thee at all, how gladly would I give thee all I have.

Hermas, called the shepherd, heard this, and said to the rich youth: Every good gift comes from above, whither thou canst send back nothing. Come, follow me!

The youth followed the pious old man, and they entered into a gloomy hut, where there was real sorrow and misery; for the father lay sick, and the mother wept, and the children were naked and crying for bread.

The young man was terrified. But Hermas said: Behold here an altar for thine offering! See here a brother and representative of the Lord!

Then the rich young man opened his hands over them, and gave them liberally of his goods, and waited on the sick. And the poor whom he comforted, blessed him, and called him an angel of the Lord.

Thomas smiled and said: So turn thou always thy grateful countenance first towards heaven and then to earth.

166. THE NEW CREATION.

A nobleman had inherited from a rich uncle a large tract of land, together with a village. But the land was marshy, unfruitful, and waste. The new owner had the standing water and marsh drained off, and planted there various trees and shrubs, so that it became a pleasant garden, with a shady grove that extended to the village.

Some years after, the teacher of his youth visited him, and the nobleman pointed out to him how he had drained the sluggish morass and converted it into a beautiful garden. The old teacher beheld all with joy, and praised the individual parts as well as the whole. The owner also told him how he intended to improve still more, and to keep in the park various kinds of game, and what enjoyment this little creation afforded him.

His old teacher then replied: You deserve it, as you have formed the dead marsh into an abode of life and joy. But this creation wants yet one thing to its completion.

And what might that be? asked the nobleman.

Do you not know, said the old man, when God the Lord had made the garden of Eden, he put man therein.

The wealthy nobleman was silent, and laid these words to heart, and when the next spring the faithful old teacher visited him, he led him round to the

end of the grove. Here stood two new fine looking edifices.

The old man smiled, pressed the nobleman's hand, and said: I well knew that thy heart would understand me. Now has love finished the work.

The two edifices were an orphan-house and a school.

167. THE POOR'S BOX.

There was once a noted wealthy man, named Benedict, which means blessed. This title belonged to him rightfully; for God blessed him abundantly with property, and all the world blessed him likewise, as he sought to make every one happy, stranger as well as neighbour, especially the poor and needy. He proceeded in the following manner.

When he had passed a day of pleasure with his friends, he went into his chamber and thought: There are many who have enjoyed no such day, and suppose I had invited as many more guests! So he put as much of his money as the entertainment cost him, into a box, which he called the poor's box. Likewise, when he heard that a fire had raged any where, he gave liberally his contribution for the support of the unfortunate. Then he looked upon his house and went into his chamber, and said: Every thing of mine still stands fast and uninjured! and on that account he put something into the box. Again, when he heard of hail-storms, scarcity of

water, and other disasters, he laid up somewhat into the poor's box for that. So also when choice wine and elegant articles were offered to him for sale, he purchased of them, yet moderately, so that they adorned his house and delighted his friends, and then he went to his chamber, and said: This thou hast bought for thyself, and art able to increase thy store, and he contributed to the poor's box. Besides, he sent cheerfully of the precious wine, if any sick body needed it. This he did his life long.

And now when he must die, there was a mourning and weeping of the poor, the widows and orphans, and they said: Who will have compassion on us, when Benedict is gone!

But he said: A good housekeeper takes care that, even when he is not at home, nothing shall be wanting to the children. So take this box, with all that is in it. It belongs to the poor, the widows, and the orphans. Distribute the contents, and administer them well and wisely. Then he died, and it was done as he had directed.

Thus the poor's box has continued a hundred years for the comfort of the needy, and the memory of the man remains blest.

168. THE SEED-CORN.

Two travellers went together over land, and whilst they rested in an inn by the way, suddenly there was a ringing of bells and a cry of fire in the

village. One of the travellers sprang up, laid aside his staff and bundle, to go in haste to help. The other, however, held him back, saying: Why should we tarry here? Are there not hands enough to help. What concern have we with strangers?

The former, however, gave no heed to what he said, but ran out to the burning house. Some time after the other followed and stood looking on at a distance.

Before the burning house there stood a mother, as if benumbed, and cried: My children, my children!

The stranger, on hearing this, sprang into the burning house, amid the cracking beams, and the flames gathered round him. The people exclaimed: He is lost!

When they had waited awhile, behold, he came out with singed hair, carrying two children in his arms, and took them to the mother. She embraced them, and fell at the feet of her benefactor. But he raised her up and consoled her. Meanwhile the house fell with a crash.

When the stranger and his companion now returned to the inn, the latter said: But, who called you to run such a risk? The former replied: He who commands me to put the seed in the earth, that it may rot and bring forth new fruit.

But what, said the other, if the ruins of the house had buried. . . . .

His companion smiled and said: Then I myself would have been the seed-corn.

169. THE LEPROSY.

Juda, a prophet of the Lord, one day visited Eli, a judge in Israel, intending to spend some days with him.

But the next day the prophet stood before Eli, with his staff in his hand, and with a sad countenance said to his friend Eli: I remain no longer, but must bless thee and go hence.

This troubled Eli, and he said: Be it far from thee, thus to spoil my joy, and leave me in distress. What drives thee hence?

Then Juda opened his mouth and said: Alas, Eli, the misery of thy house distresses me, and the leprosy of thy sons.

Eli was alarmed, and said: What, my sons be leprous, and I not know it?

But Juda answered and said: Not the outward leprosy of the body, a worse one! They despise their father, and are too proud to hearken unto their mother. So every thing holy in them must die; they will follow their lusts and bring death and destruction upon their own heads, and upon thee and thy house. Behold, that is the leprosy which drives me hence. Then was Eli still more alarmed; but it happened as Judah had predicted.

170. THE COURSE OF SIN.

A father had a son of a mischievous turn, whom he indulged in every whim and wish of his heart. He even threw burs secretly on the clothes and into the hair of those who came into his father's house, or passed by; and the father laughed at it. But a serious man, to whom this happened, observed it, and turned about and said: Forbid your child to begin in this way, and watch over him, whilst young; else your laughing will be turned into mourning!

They laughed at that yet more, and the boy drove his mischievous insulting sport still further, and, as he grew up, threw dirt and stones. Then his father tried to check him; but he mocked his father.

The bones of the son are bleaching on the gallows before the face of the father; but he sees it not. For his eyes are dissolved in tears.

171. THE VOICE OF THE JUDGMENT.

A rich man, named Chryses, commanded his servants to expel a poor widow with her children from one of his houses, because she was unable to pay the annual rent. When the servants came, the woman said: O, wait a little, perhaps your master may take compassion on us; I will go and plead with him.

Thereupon the widow went to the rich man with her four children, for one was lying sick, and a

earnestly implored him not to drive them out. But Chryses said: My orders I cannot recall, unless you immediately pay your debt.

Then the mother wept bitterly, and said: Alas! the care of a sick child has consumed all my earnings, and hindered me from working. And the children entreated with the mother not to expel them.

But Chryses turned away from them and went into his summer-house, and laid himself down on his cushion to rest, as usual. It was a sultry day, and near by the summer-house there flowed a stream, which cooled the atmosphere around; and it was so still that not a breath of air stirred.

Chryses heard the whisperings of the reeds on the shore, but they sounded to him like the lispings of the poor widow's children, and made him restless on his couch. Then he heard the rushing of the river, and it seemed to him as if he were resting on the shore of a boundless sea, and he tossed on his pillow.

When now he listened again, he heard in the distance the thunder of a gathering storm, and it was to him as if he heard the voice of judgment.

Now he arose suddenly, hastened to his house, and ordered his servants to open the house to the poor widow. But she had gone into the woods with her children, and was nowhere to be found. Meanwhile the storm had come on, and it thun-

dered heavily, and poured down rain in torrents. Chryses was very uneasy and paced the floor.

The next day he learned that the sick child had died in the woods, and the mother had gone away with the rest. Then his garden, palace, and cushion were a torment to him, and he enjoyed no more the coolness of the flowing stream.

Chryses soon after took sick, and in the heat of his fever he always heard the whisper of the reeds, the rushing of the river, and the heavy roar of the coming storm. Thus he died.

172. THE ATONEMENT.

A pious and wise father sent his only and well-beloved son abroad, on his becoming a young man, that he might become acquainted with the wisdom of other lands, and learn something of the character and habits of mankind. But wicked fellows enticed him and led him astray into the corrupting ways of frivolity and sin.

After he had spent all he had in folly and vice, he suffered poverty and wretchedness. His seducers, however, now deserted him, and mocked him. So he joined a band of robbers.

A friend of his father having heard of this, and having ascertained where the misguided youth was pursuing his criminal course, he went out on the road in the twilight. The young robber stepped up before him and threatened to rob him. The

gentleman handed him his money, and said: Gladly would I give you much more, if you would come with me to my house, and save your soul! The youth then recognised the friend of the family, trembled, and cried aloud: Righteous God, to what have I come! The friend took his hand and said, calmly: You are, from this time forth, again your father's son; for you know yourself, and are aware of your conduct. Come away from this dark ravine, and follow me.

So saying, he took him home with him. But the youth was ashamed and penitent, and wept bitterly.

Some time after, the friend said to him: It is now time for you to go home. I will accompany you. Then the penitent youth was seized with trembling and shuddering, and said: How can I, sinful, lost man, appear in the presence of my father, and obtain his forgiveness! But the other replied: Do you doubt the love and pardon of your father, when you have experienced the love of his friend? The youth replied, with tears: Just because his love is so great, my sin is the greater. How could I ever again behold his face in peace.

As they two now drew near his home, the young man lingered, cast his eyes on the ground, and said: No, I dare not tread the threshold! But the father saw him afar off, and knew all, and ran to meet him with open arms. And when the youth embraced his feet with tears, the father lifted him up

and wept on his neck for joy, and said: Thou art yet my beloved son, and alive. O, be of good cheer, and confide in my love. Then he led him into the house, and shewed even more kindness than before.

But the son continued to be reserved and sorrowful, and mourned in secret; and whenever he saw his father, his countenance fell. Then said his father to him: Wilt thou always mourn? O, be comforted, and know, at length, my heart and my love! The son, however, answered: O, my father, that you should have received back again, without punishment or reproof. . . How could I deserve such love?

The father remarked with a gentle voice: The night is now passed, and the day of new life has risen upon thee amid tears. So dry up your tears, and walk joyfully, as in the day.

The youth then looked up into the friendly countenance of his father, and out of humility there sprung up in him manly faith, and joyously thankful love.

173. TOBIAS, OR THE ART OF DYING.

When Tobias, the younger, was well advanced in years, having spent ninety-nine years joyfully in the fear of God, he was taken sick; for the end of his days had come. His son, Azarias, stood by his bedside, and wept; for the severe conflict of his father went to his heart. But Tobias mourned not,

nor complained; but his soul was calm, and his countenance brightened up again, in the intervals of his pain.

Then said Azarias: I cannot but wonder, when I see you joyful and of good courage in such bitter pain and agony!

Tobias then opened his mouth, and said: Behold, I have often told you of my journey from Nineveh to the country of the Medes, on which my father sent me in the days of my youth. After I had faithfully, by the blessing of God, accomplished the wishes of my father, the hour of departure for home arrived. With joyful spirit I commenced the difficult journey home; for I had executed my business, and was going towards the house of my father. The last days of the journey were the hardest, for they were through a scorching, sandy desert, and over a rugged, steep mountain. But the thought of my father and home filled my heart with resolution, and gave strength to my weary limbs. I doubled my speed, reached home, and fell into the arms of my father.

Just here a violent attack of pain seized the dying man. When this passed off, the old man smiled, and proceeded thus in his discourse: And what is a mortal father compared with the Eternal? Has not he guided me all my life long, and sent his angel to me, in time of danger and trouble? And shall he now desert me at the end of the journey? No! my pilgrimage is ended—I am going home.

After these words, Tobias blessed his children and his grandchildren, and expired in the arms of his son. . . And they buried him; and all his posterity continued stedfast in a holy walk and conversation.

174. THE ASSURANCE.

An only daughter, the comfort and joy of her parents, was attacked with a dangerous disease and died. The father and mother wept over her three whole days, and then she was buried.

The father, however, when he returned from the grave, could not be comforted, and his grief grew upon him. Then the mother took courage and dried her tears, put on a cheerful countenance, and said to the father: Weep no longer! the maid is well taken care of for us; we shall see her again. Our child lives.

But the father said: How knowest thou that? Oh, it seems to me like an illusion of the sorrow.

The mother of the child rose, and said: My heart assures me of the truth. Behold, my maternal love is everlasting; shall the paternal love of the Eternal One disappoint us?

175. THE CONSUMMATION.

Amos one day visited his friend Bildad, and lo,

he found him weeping bitterly, supporting his grey head on both hands.

And Amos said to his friend: Why weepest thou?

Bildad pointed to a bed that stood in the room, and on the bed lay the corpse of a youth, the only son of Bildad, who had fallen a victim to disease.

See, said Bildad, there lies my hope, a prey to corruption.

Thy hope, answered Amos, sorrowfully. But will not the faith of my friend soften and subdue his grief?

Bildad answered, and said: Alas! my faith is weak and worn out, since my love and hope were so disappointed. Have I not carefully watched and cultivated the fine talents of the boy? And now, just as they were every day drawing near to their complete developement—

A flood of tears interrupted the remarks of the father.

Amos remained silent for some time, and then said to Bildad: You are distressed that you could not complete your work. And how? Bildad, that Eternal love which gave to the youth his spirit and his parts—shall it not consummate what it has begun?

176. TEARS.

Hillel walked, on a moonlight night, with his disciple, Sadi, in the garden on Olivet.

Sadi said: See that man there in the light of the moon. What is he doing?

Hillel replied: It is Zadoc; he sits on the grave of his son, and weeps.

Cannot Zadoc, then, said the youth, moderate his mourning? The people call him the just and wise.

Shall he not on that account feel pain? said Hillel.

But, said Sadi: What advantage, then, has the wise over the simple?

The teacher replied: Behold, the briny tear of his eye falls to the ground, but his countenance is directed to heaven.

THE END.

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